SAINT PAULS.

AUGUST, 1871.

WILFRID CUMBERMEDE.

An Autobiographical Story.

BY GEORGE MAC DONALD, AUTHOR OF "ALEC FORBES," ETC.

CHAPTER XXXV.

A TALK WITH CHARLEY.

THE following Monday, in the evening, Charley arrived, in great spirits, more excited indeed than I liked to see him. There was a restlessness in his eye which made me especially anxious, for it raised a doubt whether the appearance of good spirits was not the result merely of resistance to some anxiety. But I hoped my companionship, with the air and exercise of the country, would help to quiet him again. In the late twilight we took a walk together up and down my field.

"I suppose you let your mother know you were coming, Charley?" I said.

"I did not," he answered. "My father must have nothing to lay to their charge in case he should hear of our meeting."

"But he has not forbidden you to go home, has he?"

"No, certainly. But he as good as told me I was not to go home while he was away. He does not wish me to be there without his presence to counteract my evil influences. He seems to regard my mere proximity as dangerous. I sometimes wonder whether the severity of his religion may not have affected his mind. Almost all madness, you know, turns either upon love or religion."

"So I have heard. I doubt it—with men. It may be with women. —But you won't surprise them? It might startle your mother too much. She is not strong, you say. Hadn't I better tell Clara Coningham? She can let them know you are here."

"It would be better."

"What do you say to going there with me to-morrow? I will send my man with a note in the morning."

He looked a little puzzled and undetermined, but said at length,

"I daresay your plan is the best. How long has Miss Coningham been here?"

"About ten days, I think."

He looked thoughtful, and made no answer.

"I see, you are afraid of my falling in love with her again," I said. "I confess I like her much better than I did, but I am not quite sure about her yet. She is very bewitching anyhow, and a little more might make me lose my heart to her. The evident dislike she has to Brotherton would of itself recommend her to any friend of yours or mine."

He turned his face away.

"Do not be anxious about me," I went on. "The first shadowy conviction of any untruthfulness in her, if not sufficient to change my feelings at once, would at once initiate a backward movement in them."

He kept his face turned away, and I was perplexed. After a few moments of silence, he turned it towards me again, as if relieved by some resolution suddenly formed, and said with a smile under a still clouded brow,

"Well, old fellow, we'll see. It'll all come right, I daresay. Write your note early and we'll follow it. How glad I *shall* be to have a glimpse of that blessed mother of mine without her attendant dragon!"

"For God's sake don't talk of your father so. Surely after all he is a good man!"

"Then I want a new reading of the word."

"He loves God at least."

"I won't stop to inquire—" said Charley, plunging at once into argument—"what influence for good it might or might not have to love a non-existence: I will only ask—Is it a good God he loves or a bad one? If the latter, he can hardly be called good for loving him."

"But if there be a God at all, he must be a good God."

"Suppose the true God to be the good God, it does not follow that my father worships *him*. There is such a thing as worshipping a false God. At least the Bible recognizes it. For my part, I find myself compelled to say—either that the true God is not a good God, or that my father does not worship the true God. If you say he worships the God of the Bible, I either admit or dispute the assertion, but set it aside as altering nothing; for if I admit it, the argument lies thus: my father worships a bad God; my father worships the God of the Bible: therefore the God of the Bible is a bad God; and if I admit the authority of the Bible, then the true God is a bad

God. If however I dispute the assertion that he worships the God of the Bible, I am left to show, if I can, that the God of the Bible is a good God, and, if I admit the authority of the Bible, to worship another than my father's God. If I do not admit the authority of the Bible, there may for all that be a good God, or, which is next best to a perfectly good God, there may be no God at all."

"Put like a lawyer, Charley; and yet I would venture to join issue with your first assertion—on which the whole argument is founded—that your father worships a bad God."

"Assuredly what he asserts concerning his God is bad."

"Admitted; but does he assert *only* bad things of his God?"

"I daren't say that. But God is one. You will hardly dare the proposition that an infinite being may be partly good and partly bad."

"No. I heartily hold that God must be *one*—a proposition far more essential than that there is one God—so far at least as my understanding can judge. It is only in the limited human nature that good and evil can co-exist. But there is just the point: we are not speaking of the absolute God, but of the idea of a man concerning that God. You could suppose yourself utterly convinced of a good God long before your ideas of goodness were so correct as to render you incapable of attributing anything wrong to that God. Supposing such to be the case, and that you came afterwards to find that you had been thinking something wrong about him, do you think you would therefore grant that you had been believing either in a wicked or in a false God?"

"Certainly not."

"Then you must give your father the same scope. He attributes what we are absolutely certain are bad things to his God—and yet he may believe in a good God, for the good in his idea of God is alone that in virtue of which he is able to believe in him. No mortal can believe in the bad."

"He puts the evil foremost in his creed and exhortations."

"That may be. Few people know their own deeper minds. The more potent a power in us, I suspect it is the more hidden from our scrutiny."

"If there be a God then, Wilfrid, he is very indifferent to what his creatures think of him."

"Perhaps very patient and hopeful, Charley—who knows? Perhaps he will not force himself upon them, but help them to grow into the true knowledge of him. Your father may worship the true God, and yet have only a little of that knowledge."

A silence followed. At length—

"Thank you for my father," said Charley.

"Thank my uncle," I said.

"For not being like my father?—I do," he returned.

It was the loveliest evening that brooded round us as we walked.

The moon had emerged from a rippled sea of gray cloud, over which she cast her dull opaline halo. Great masses and banks of cloud lay about the rest of the heavens, and in the dark rifts between, a star or two were visible, gazing from the awful distance.

"I wish I could let it into me, Wilfrid," said Charley, after we had been walking in silence for some time along the grass.

"Let what into you, Charley?"

"The night and the blue and the stars."

"Why don't you then?"

"I hate being taken in. The more pleasant a self-deception, the less I choose to submit to it."

"That is reasonable. But where lies the deception?"

"I don't say it's a deception. I only don't know that it isn't."

"Please explain."

"I mean what you call the beauty of the night."

"Surely there can be little question of that?"

"Ever so little is enough. Suppose I asked you wherein its beauty consisted: would you be satisfied if I said—In the arrangement of the blue and the white, with the sparkles of yellow, and the colours about the scarce visible moon?"

"Certainly not. I should reply that it lay in the gracious peace of the whole—troubled only with the sense of some lovely secret behind, of which itself was but the half-modelled representation, and therefore the reluctant outcome."

"Suppose I rejected the latter half of what you say, admitting the former, but judging it only the fortuitous result of the half-necessary, half-fortuitous concurrences of nature. Suppose I said:—The air which is necessary to our life, happens to be blue; the stars can't help shining through it and making it look deep; and the clouds are just there because they must be somewhere till they fall again; all which is more agreeable to us than fog because we feel more comfortable in weather of the sort, whence, through complacency and habit, we have got to call it beautiful:—suppose I said this, would you accept it?"

"Such a theory would destroy my delight in nature altogether."

"Well, isn't it the truth?"

"It would be easy to show that the sense of beauty does not spring from any amount of comfort; but I do not care to pursue the argument from that starting-point.—I confess when you have once waked the questioning spirit, and I look up at the clouds and the stars with what I may call sharpened eyes—eyes, that is, which assert their seeing, and so render themselves incapable for the time of submitting to impressions, I am as blind as any Sadducee could desire. I see blue, and white, and gold, and, in short, a tent-roof somewhat ornate. I daresay if I were in a miserable mood, having been deceived and disappointed like Hamlet, I should with him see there nothing but a

foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. But I know that when I am passive to its powers, I am aware of a presence altogether different—of a something at once soothing and elevating, powerful to move shame—even contrition and the desire of amendment."

"Yes, yes," said Charley hastily. "But let me suppose further—and, perhaps you will allow, better—that this blueness—I take a part for the whole—belongs essentially and of necessity to the atmosphere, itself so essential to our physical life; suppose also that this blue has essential relation to our spiritual nature—taking for the moment our spiritual nature for granted—suppose, in a word, all nature so related, not only to our physical but to our spiritual nature, that it and we form an organic whole full of action and reaction between the parts—would that satisfy you? would it enable you to look on the sky this night with absolute pleasure? would you want nothing more?"

I thought for a little before I answered.

"No, Charley," I said at last—"it would not satisfy me. For it would indicate that beauty might be after all but the projection of my own mind—the name I gave to a harmony between that around me and that within me. There would then be nothing absolute in beauty. There would be no such thing in itself. It would exist only as a phase of me, when I was in a certain mood; and when I was earthly-minded, passionate, or troubled, it would be *no*where. But in my best moods I feel that in nature lies the form and fashion of a peace and grandeur so much beyond anything in me, that they rouse the sense of poverty and incompleteness and blame in the want of them."

"Do you perceive whither you are leading yourself?"

"I would rather hear you say."

"To this then—that the peace and grandeur of which you speak, must be a mere accident, therefore an unreality and pure *appearance*, or the outcome and representation of a peace and grandeur which, not to be found in us, yet exist, and make use of this frame of things to set forth and manifest themselves in order that we may recognize and desire them."

"Granted—heartily."

"In other words—you lead yourself inevitably to a God manifest in nature—not as a powerful being—that is a theme absolutely without interest to me—but as possessed in himself of the original pre-existent beauty, the counterpart of which in us we call art, and who has fashioned us so that we must fall down and worship the image of himself which he has set up."

"That's good, Charley. I'm so glad you've worked that out!"

"It doesn't in the least follow that I believe it. I cannot even say I wish I did:—for what I know, that might be to wish to be deceived. Of all miseries—to believe in a lovely thing and find it not true—that must be the worst."

"You might never find it out though," I said. "You might be able to comfort yourself with it all your life."

"I was wrong," he cried fiercely. "Never to find it out would be the hell of all hells. Wilfrid, I am ashamed of you!"

"So should I be, Charley, if I had meant it. I only wanted to make you speak. I agree with you entirely. But I *do* wish we could be *quite* sure of it;—for I don't believe any man can ever be sure of a thing that is not true."

"My father is sure that the love of nature is not only a delusion, but a snare. I should have no right to object, were he not equally sure of the existence of a God who created and rules it.—By the way, if I believed in a God, I should say *creates*, not *created*.—I told him once, not long ago, when he fell out upon nature—he had laid hands on a copy of *Endymion* belonging to me—I don't know how the devil he got it—I asked him whether he thought the devil made the world. You should have seen the white wrath he went into at the question! I told him it was generally believed one or the other did make the world. He told me God made the world, but sin had unmade it. I asked him if it was sin that made it so beautiful. He said it was sin that made me think it so beautiful. I remarked how very ugly it must have looked when God had just finished it! He called me a blasphemer, and walked to the door. I stopped him for a moment by saying that I thought after all he must be right, for according to geologists the world must have been a horrible place and full of the most hideous creatures before sin came and made it lovely. When he saw my drift, he strode up to me like—well, very like his own God, I should think—and was going to strike me. I looked him in the eyes without moving, as if he had been a madman. He turned and left the room. I left the house, and went back to London the same night."

"Oh, Charley! Charley! that was too bad!"

"I knew it, Wilfrid, and yet I did it! But if your father had made a downright coward of you, afraid to speak the truth, or show what you were thinking, you also might find that when anger gave you a fictitious courage, you could not help breaking out. It's only another form of cowardice, I know; and I am as much ashamed of it as you could wish me to be."

"Have you made it up with him since?"

"I've never seen him since."

"Haven't you written then?"

"No. Where's the use? He never would understand me. He knows no more of the condition of my mind than he does of the other side of the moon. If I offered such, he would put aside all apology for my behaviour to him—repudiating himself, and telling me it was the wrath of an offended God, not of an earthly parent I had to deprecate. If I told him I had only spoken against

his false God—how far would that go to mend the matter, do you think?"

"Not far, I must allow. But I am very sorry."

"I wouldn't care if I could be sure of anything—or even sure that if I were sure, I shouldn't be mistaken."

"I'm afraid you're very morbid, Charley."

"Perhaps. But you cannot deny that my father is sure of things that you believe utterly false."

"I suspect, however, that if we were able to get a bird's-eye view of his mind and all its workings, we should discover that what he called assurance was not the condition you would call such. You would find it was not the certainty you covet."

"I *have* thought of that, and it is my only comfort. But I am sick of the whole subject. See that cloud!—Isn't it like Death on the pale horse? What fun it must be for the cherubs on such a night as this, to go blowing the clouds into fantastic shapes with their trumpet cheeks!"

Assurance was ever what Charley wanted, and unhappily the sense of intellectual insecurity weakened his moral action.

Once more I reveal a haunting uneasiness in the expression of a hope that the ordered character of the conversation I have just set down may not render it incredible to my reader. I record the result alone. The talk itself was far more desultory, and in consequence of questions, objections, and explanations, divaricated much from the comparatively direct line I have endeavoured to give it here. In the hope of making my reader understand both Charley and myself, I have sought to make the winding and rough path straight and smooth.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

TAPESTRY.

HAVING heard what I was about at the Hall, Charley expressed a desire to take a share in my labours, especially as thereby he would be able to see more of his mother and sister. I took him straight to the book-rooms, and we were hard at work when Clara entered.

"Here is your old friend Charley Osborne," I said. "You remember Miss Coningham, Charley, I know."

He advanced in what seemed a strangely embarrassed—indeed rather sheepish manner, altogether unlike his usual bearing. I attributed it to a doubt whether Clara would acknowledge their old acquaintance. On her part, she met him with some frankness, but I thought also a rather embarrassed look, which was the more surprising as I had let her know he was coming. But they shook hands, and in a little while we were all chatting comfortably.

"Shall I go and tell Mrs. Osborne you are here?" she asked.

"Yes, if you please," said Charley, and she went.

In a few minutes Mrs. Osborne and Mary entered. The meeting was full of affection, but to my eye looked like a meeting of the living and the dead in a dream—there was such an evident sadness in it, as if each was dimly aware that they met but in appearance and were in reality far asunder. I could not doubt that however much they loved him, and however little they sympathized with his father's treatment of him, his mother and sister yet regarded him as separated from them by a great gulf—that of culpable unbelief. But they seemed therefore only the more anxious to please and serve him—their anxiety revealing itself in an eagerness painfully like the service offered to one whom the doctors have given up, and who may now have any indulgence he happens to fancy.

"I say, mother," said Charley, who seemed to strive after an airier manner even than usual—"couldn't you come and help us? It would be so jolly!"

"No, my dear; I mustn't leave Lady Brotherton. That would be rude, you know. But I daresay Mary might."

"Oh, please, mamma! I should like it so much—especially if Clara would stop! But perhaps Mr. Cumbermede—we ought to have asked him first."

"Yes—to be sure—he's the foreman," said Charley. "But he's not a bad fellow, and won't be disobliging. Only you must do as he tells you, or it'll be the worse for us all. *I* know him."

"I shall be delighted," I said. "I can give both the ladies plenty to do. Indeed I regard Miss Coningham as one of my hands already. Won't Miss Brotherton honour us to-day, Miss Coningham?"

"I will go and ask her," said Clara.

They all withdrew. In a little while I had four assistants, and we got on famously. The carpenter had been hard at work, and the room next the armoury, the oak-panelling of which had shown considerable signs of decay, had been repaired, and the shelves, which were in tolerable condition, were now ready to receive their burden, and reflect the first rays of a dawning order.

Plenty of talk went on during the dusting and arranging of the books by their size, which was the first step towards a cosmos. There was a certain playful naïveté about Charley's manner and speech when he was happy which gave him an instant advantage with women, and even made the impression of wit where there was only grace. Although he was perfectly capable, however, of engaging to any extent in the *badinage* which has ever been in place between young men and women since dawning humanity was first aware of a lovely difference, there was always a certain indescribable dignity about what he said which I now see could have come only from a *believing* heart. I use the word advisedly, but would rather my reader should find

what I mean than require me to explain it fully. Belief to my mind lies chiefly in the practical recognition of the high and pure.

Miss Brotherton looked considerably puzzled sometimes, and indeed out of her element. But her dignity had no chance with so many young people, and was compelled to thaw visibly; and while growing more friendly with the others, she could not avoid unbending towards me also, notwithstanding I was a neighbour and the son of a dairy-farmer.

Mary Osborne took little part in the fun beyond a smile, or in the more solid conversation beyond an assent or an ordinary remark. I did not find her very interesting. An onlooker would probably have said she lacked expression. But the stillness upon her face bore to me the shadow of a reproof. Perhaps it was only a want of sympathy with what was going on around her. Perhaps her soul was either far withdrawn from its present circumstances, or not yet awake to the general interests of life. There was little in the form or hue of her countenance to move admiration, beyond a complexion without spot. It was very fair and delicate, with little more colour in it than in the white rose, which but the faintest warmth redeems from dead whiteness. Her features were good in form, but in no way remarkable; her eyes were of the so-called hazel, which consists of a mingling of brown and green; her figure was good but seemed unelastic, and she had nothing of her brother's gaiety or grace of movement or expression. I do not mean that either her motions or her speech was clumsy—there was simply nothing to remark in them beyond the absence of anything special. In a word, I did not find her interesting, save as the sister of my delightful Charley, and the sharer of his mother's griefs concerning him.

"If I had as good help in the afternoon," I said, "we should have all the books on the shelves to-night, and be able to set about assorting them to-morrow."

"I am sorry I cannot come this afternoon," said Miss Brotherton. "I should have been most happy if I could. It is really very pleasant—notwithstanding the dust. But Mrs. Osborne and mamma want me to go with them to Minstercombe. You will lunch with us to-day, won't you?" she added, turning to Charley.

"Thank you, Miss Brotherton," he replied; "I should have been delighted, but I am not my own master—I am Cumbermede's slave at present, and can eat and drink only when and where he chooses."

"You *must* stay with your mother, Charley," I said. "You cannot refuse Miss Brotherton."

She could thereupon scarcely avoid extending the invitation to me, but I declined it on some pretext or other, and I was again, thanks to Lilith, back from my dinner before they had finished luncheon. The carriage was at the door when I rode up, and the moment I

heard it drive away, I went to the dining-room to find my coadjutors. The only person there was Miss Pease. A thought struck me.

"Won't you come and help us, Miss Pease?" I said. "I have lost one of my assistants, and I am very anxious to get the room we are at now so far finished to-night."

A smile found its way to her cold eyes, and set the blue sparkling for one briefest moment.

"It is very kind of you, Mr. Cumbermede, but——"

"Kind!" I exclaimed—"I want your help, Miss Pease."

"I'm afraid——"

"Lady Brotherton can't want you now. Do oblige me. You will find it fun."

She smiled outright—evidently at the fancy of any relation between her and fun.

"Do go and put a cap on, and a cotton dress, and come," I persisted.

Without another word she left the room. I was still alone in the library when she came to me, and having shown her what I wanted, we were already busy when the rest arrived.

"Oh Peasey! Are you there?" said Clara, as she entered—not unkindly.

"I have got a substitute for Miss Brotherton, you see, Clara—Miss Coningham—I beg your pardon."

"There's no occasion to beg my pardon. Why shouldn't you call me Clara if you like? It *is* my name."

"Charley might be taking the same liberty," I returned, extemporizing a reason.

"And why *shouldn't* Charley take the same liberty?" she retorted.

"For no reason that I know," I answered, a trifle hurt, "if it be agreeable to the lady."

"And the gentleman," she amended.

"And the gentleman," I added.

"Very well. Then we are all good boys and girls. Now Peasey, I'm very glad you're come. Only mind you get back to your place before the ogress returns, or you'll have your head snapped off."

Was I right, or was it the result of the slight offence I had taken?—Was the gracious, graceful, naïve, playful, daring woman—or could she be—or had she been just the least little bit vulgar? I am afraid I was then more sensitive to vulgarity in a woman, real or fancied, than even to wickedness—at least I thought I was. At all events, the first *conviction* of anything common or unrefined in a woman would at once have placed me beyond the sphere of her attraction. But I had no time to think the suggestion over now; and in a few minutes—whether she saw the cloud on my face I cannot tell—Clara had given me a look and a smile which banished the possibility of my thinking about it for the present.

Miss Pease worked more diligently than any of the party. She seldom spoke, and when she did, it was in a gentle, subdued, almost mournful tone; but the company of the young people without the restraint of her mistress, was evidently grateful to what of youth yet remained in her oppressed being.

Before it was dark we had got the books all upon the shelves, and leaving Charley with the ladies, I walked home.

I found Styles had got everything out of the lumber-room except a heavy oak chest in the corner, which, our united strength being insufficient to displace it, I concluded was fixed to the floor. I collected all the keys my aunt had left behind her, but sought the key of this chest in vain. For my uncle, I never saw a key in his possession. Even what little money he might have in the house, was only put away at the back of an open drawer. For the present, therefore, we had to leave it undisturbed.

When Charley came home, we went to look at it together. It was of oak, and somewhat elaborately carved.

I was very restless in bed that night. The air was close and hot, and as often as I dropped half asleep I woke again with a start. My thoughts kept stupidly running on the old chest. It had mechanically possessed me. I felt no disturbing curiosity concerning its contents; I was not annoyed at the want of the key; it was only that, like a nursery rhyme that keeps repeating itself over and over in the half-sleeping brain, this chest kept rising before me till I was out of patience with its intrusiveness. It brought me wide awake at last; and I thought, as I could not sleep, I would have a search for the key. I got out of bed, put on my dressing gown and slippers, lighted my chamber candle, and made an inroad upon the contents of the closet in my room, which had apparently remained undisturbed since the morning when I missed my watch. I believe I had never entered it since. Almost the first thing I came upon was the pendulum, which woke a strange sensation for which I could not account, until by slow degrees the twilight memory of the incidents connected with it half dawned upon me. I searched the whole place, but not a key could I find.

I started violently at the sound of something like a groan, and for the briefest imaginable moment forgot that my grannie was dead, and thought it must come from her room. It may be remembered that such a sound had led me to her in the middle of the night on which she died. Whether I really heard the sound, or only fancied I heard it—by some half mechanical action of the brain, roused by the association of ideas—I do not even yet know. It may have been changed or expanded into a groan, from one of those innumerable sounds heard in every old house in the stillness of the night; for such, in the absence of the correction given by other sounds, assume place and proportion as it were at their pleasure. What lady has not at

midnight mistaken the trail of her own dress on the carpet, in a silent house, for some tumult in a distant room? Curious to say, however, it now led to the same action as the groan I had heard so many years before; for I caught up my candle at once, and took my way down to the kitchen, and up the winding stair behind the chimney to grannie's room. Strange as it may seem, I had not been in it since my return; for my thoughts had been so entirely occupied with other things, that, although I now and then looked forward with considerable expectation to a thorough search of the place, especially of the bureau, I kept it up as a *bonne bouche*, the anticipation of which was consolation enough for the postponement.

I confess it was with no little quavering of the spirit that I sought this chamber in the middle of the night. For, by its association with one who had from my earliest recollection seemed like something forgotten and left behind in the onward rush of life, it was, far more than anything else in the house, like a piece of the past embedded in the present—a fragment that had been, by some eddy in the stream of time, prevented from gliding away down its course, and left to lie for ever in a cranny of the solid shore of unmoving space. But although subject to more than the ordinary tremor at the thought of unknown and invisible presences, I must say for myself that I had never yielded so far as to allow such tremor to govern my actions. Even in my dreams I have resisted ghostly terrors, and can recall one in which I so far conquered a lady-ghost who took every means of overcoming me with terror, that at length she fell in love with me, whereupon my fear vanished utterly—a conceited fancy, and as such let it fare.

I opened the door then with some trembling, half expecting to see first the white of my grannie's cap against the tall back of her dark chair. But my senses were sound, and no such illusion seized me. All was empty, cheerless, and musty. Grannie's bed, with its white curtains, looked as if it were mouldering away after her. The dust lay thick on the counterpane of patchwork silk. The bureau stood silent with all its secrets. In the fire-place was the same brushwood and coals which Nannie laid the morning of grannie's death: interrupted by the discovery of my presence, she had left it, and that fire had never been lighted. Half for the sake of companionship, half because the air felt sepulchral and I was thinly clad, I put my candle to it and it blazed up. My courage revived, and after a little more gazing about the room, I ventured to sit down in my grannie's chair and watch the growing fire. Warned however by the shortness of my candle, I soon rose to proceed with my search, and turned towards the bureau.

Here, however, the same difficulty occurred. The top of the bureau was locked as when I had last tried it, and not one of my keys would fit it. At a loss what to do or where to search, I dropped

again into the chair by the fire, and my eyes went roving about the room. They fell upon a black dress which hung against the wall. At the same moment I remembered that when she gave me the watch, she took the keys of the bureau from her pocket. I went to the dress and found a pocket, not indeed in the dress, but hanging under it from the same peg. There her keys were! It would have been a marvel to me how my aunt came to leave them undisturbed all those years, but for the instant suggestion that my uncle must have expressed a wish to that effect. With eager hand I opened the bureau. Besides many trinkets in the drawers, some of them of exceedingly antique form, and, I fancied, of considerable value, I found in the pigeon-holes what I was far more pleased to discover—a good many letters, carefully tied in small bundles, with ribbon which had lost all determinable colour. These I resolved to take an early opportunity of reading, but replaced for the present, and, having come at last upon one hopeful-looking key, I made haste to return before my candle, which was already flickering in the socket, should go out altogether, and leave me darkling. When I reached the kitchen, however, I found the gray dawn already breaking. I retired once more to my chamber, and was soon fast asleep.

In the morning, my first care was to try the key. It fitted. I oiled it well, and then tried the lock. I had to use considerable force, but at last there came a great clang that echoed through the empty room. When I raised the lid, I knew by the weight it was of iron. In fact, the whole chest was iron with a casing of oak. The lock threw eight bolts, which laid hold of a rim that ran all round the lip of the chest. It was full of "very ancient and fish-like" papers and parchments. I do not know whether my father or grandfather had ever disturbed them, but I am certain my uncle never had, for as far back as I can remember, the part of the room where it stood was filled with what had been, at one time and another, condemned as lumber.

Charley was intensely interested in the discovery, and would have sat down at once to examine the contents of the chest, had I not persuaded him to leave them till the afternoon, that we might get on with our work at the Hall.

The second room was now ready for the carpenter, but, having had a peep of tapestry behind the shelves, a new thought had struck me. If it was in good preservation, it would be out of the question to hide it behind books.

I fear I am getting tedious. My apology for diffuseness in this part of my narrative is that some threads of the fringe of my own fate show every now and then in the record of these proceedings. I confess also that I hang back from certain things which are pressing nearer with their claim for record.

When we reached the Hall, I took the carpenter with me, and had the bookshelves taken down. To my disappointment we found that

an oblong piece of some size was missing from the centre of the tapestry on one of the walls. That which covered the rest of the room was entire. It was all of good Gobelins work—somewhat tame in colour. The damaged portion represented a wooded landscape with water and reedy flowers and aquatic fowl, towards which in the distance came a hunter with a crossbow in his hand, and a queer, lurcher-looking dog bounding uncouthly at his heel: the edge of the vacant space cut off the dog's tail and the top of the man's crossbow.

I went to find Sir Giles. He was in the dining room, where they had just finished breakfast.

"Ah, Mr. Cumbermede!" he said, rising as I entered, and holding out his hand—"here already?"

"We have uncovered some tapestry, Sir Giles, and I want you to come and look at, if you please."

"I will," he answered. "Would any of you ladies like to go and see it?"

His daughter and Clara rose. Lady Brotherton and Mrs. Osborne sat still. Mary, glancing at her mother, remained seated also.

"Won't you come, Miss Pease?" I said.

She looked almost alarmed at the audacity of the proposal, and murmured, "No, thank you," with a glance at Lady Brotherton, which appeared as involuntary as it was timid.

"Is my son with you?" asked Mrs. Osborne.

I told her he was.

"I shall look in upon you before the morning is over," she said quietly.

They were all pleased with the tapestry, and the ladies offered several conjectures as to the cause of the mutilation.

"It would be a shame to cover it up again—would it not Sir Giles?" I remarked.

"Indeed it would," he assented.

"If it wern't for that broken piece," said Clara. "That spoils it altogether. *I* should have the books up again as soon as possible."

"It does look shabby," said Charley. "I can't say I should enjoy having anything so defective always before my eyes."

"We must have it taken down very carefully, Hobbes," said Sir Giles, turning to the carpenter.

"*Must* it come down, Sir Giles?" I interposed. "I think it would be risky. No one knows how long it has been there, and though it might hang where it is for a century yet, and look nothing the worse, it can't be strong, and at best we could not get it down without some injury, while it is a great chance if it would fit any other place half as well."

"What do you propose then?"

"This is the largest room of the six, and the best lighted—with that lovely oriel window: I would venture to propose, Sir Giles,

that it should be left clear of books and fitted up as a reading room."

"But how would you deal with that frightful *lacuna* in the tapestry?" said Charley.

"Yes," said Sir Giles; "it won't look handsome, I fear—do what you will."

"I think I know how to manage it," I said. "If I succeed to your satisfaction, will you allow me to carry out the project?"

"But what are we to do with the books then? We shan't have room for them."

"Couldn't you let me have the next room beyond?"

"You mean to turn me out, I suppose," said Clara.

"Is there tapestry on your walls?" I asked.

"Not a thread—all wainscot—painted."

"Then your room would be the very thing!"

"It is much larger than any of these," she said.

"Then do let us have it for the library, Sir Giles," I entreated.

"I will see what Lady Brotherton says," he replied, and left the room.

In a few minutes, we heard his step returning.

"Lady Brotherton has no particular objection to giving up the room you want," he said. "Will you see Mrs. Wilson, Clara, and arrange with her for your accommodation?"

"With pleasure. I don't mind where I'm put—except it be in Lord Edward's room—where the ghost is."

"You mean the one next to ours? There is no ghost there, I assure you," said Sir Giles laughing, as he again left the room with short heavy steps.——"Manage it all to your own mind, Mr. Cumbermede. I shall be satisfied," he called back as he went.

"Until further notice," I said with grandiloquence, "I request that no one may come into this room. If you are kind enough to assort the books we put up yesterday, oblige me by going through the armoury. I must find Mrs. Wilson."

"I will go with you," said Clara. "I wonder where the old thing will want to put me. I'm not going where I don't like, I can tell her," she added, following me down the stair and across the hall and the court.

We found the housekeeper in her room. I accosted her in a friendly way. She made but a bare response.

"Would you kindly show me where I slept that night I lost my sword, Mrs. Wilson?" I said.

"I know nothing about your sword, Mr. Cumbermede," she answered, shaking her head and pursing up her mouth.

"I don't ask you anything about it, Mrs. Wilson; I only ask you where I slept the night I lost it."

"Really, Mr. Cumbermede, you can hardly expect me to remember

in what room a visitor slept—let me see—it must be twelve or fifteen years ago! I do not take it upon me."

"Oh! never mind then. I referred to the circumstances of that night, thinking they might help you to remember the room; but it is of no consequence; I shall find it for myself. Miss Coningham will, I hope, help me in the search. She knows the house better than I do."

"I must attend to my own business first, if you please, sir," said Clara. "Mrs. Wilson, I am ordered out of my room by Mr. Cumbermede. You must find me fresh quarters, if you please."

Mrs. Wilson stared.

"Do you mean, miss, that you want your things moved to another bedroom?"

"That *is* what I mean, Mrs. Wilson."

"I must see what Lady Brotherton says to it, miss."

"Do, by all means."

I saw that Clara was bent on annoying her old enemy, and interposed.

"Sir Giles and Lady Brotherton have agreed to let me have Miss Coningham's room for an addition to the library, Mrs. Wilson," I said.

She looked very grim, but made no answer. We turned and left her. She stood for a moment as if thinking, and then, taking down her bunch of keys, followed us.

"If you will come this way," she said, stopping just behind us at another door in the court, "I think I can show you the room you want. But really, Mr. Cumbermede, you are turning the place upside down. If I had thought it would come to this——"

"I hope to do so a little more yet, Mrs. Wilson," I interrupted. "But I am sure you will be pleased with the result."

She did not reply, but led the way up a stair, across the little open gallery, and by passages I did not remember, to the room I wanted. It was in precisely the same condition as when I occupied it.

"This is the room, I believe," she said, as she unlocked and threw open the door. "Perhaps it would suit you, Miss Coningham?"

"Not in the least," answered Clara. "Who knows which of my small possessions might vanish before the morning!"

The housekeeper's face grew turkey-red with indignation.

"Mr. Cumbermede has been filling your head with some of his romances, I see, Miss Clara!"

I laughed, for I did not care to show myself offended with her rudeness.

"Never you mind," said Clara; "I am *not* going to sleep there."

"Very good," said Mrs. Wilson, in a tone of offence severely restrained.

"Will you show me the way to the library?" I requested.

"I will," said Clara; "I know it as well as Mrs. Wilson—every bit."

"Then that is all I want at present, Mrs. Wilson," I said, as we came out of the room. "Don't lock the door, though, please," I added. "Or, if you do, give me the key."

She left the door open, and us in the passage. Clara led me to the library. There we found Charley waiting our return.

"Will you take that little boy to his mother, Clara?" I said. "I don't want him here to-day. We'll have a look over those papers in the evening, Charley."

"That's right," said Clara. "I hope Charley will help you to a little rational interest in your own affairs. I am quite bewildered to think that an author, not to say a young man, the sole remnant of an ancient family, however humble, shouldn't even know whether he had any papers in the house or not."

"We've come upon a glorious nest of such addled eggs, Clara. Charley and I are going to blow them to-night," I said.

"You never know when such eggs are addled," retorted Clara. "You'd better put them under some sensible fowl or other first," she added, looking back from the door as they went.

I turned to the carpenter's tool-basket, and taking from it an old chisel, a screw-driver, and a pair of pincers, went back to the room we had just left.

There could be no doubt about it. There was the tip of the dog's tail, and the top of the hunter's crossbow.

But my reader may not have retained in her memory the facts to which I implicitly refer. I would therefore, to spare repetition, beg her to look back to Chapter XIV., containing the account of the loss of my sword.

In the consternation caused me by the discovery that this loss was no dream of the night, I had never thought of examining the wall of the chamber to see whether there was in it a door or not; but I saw now at once plainly enough that the inserted patch did cover a small door. Opening it, I found within, a creaking wooden stair, leading up to another low door, which, fashioned like the door of a companion, opened upon the roof:—nowhere, except in the towers, had the Hall more than two stories. As soon as I had drawn back the bolt and stepped out, I found myself standing at the foot of an ornate stack of chimneys, and remembered quite well having tried the door that night Clara and I were shut out on the leads—the same night on which my sword was stolen.

For the first time the question now rose in my mind whether Mrs. Wilson could have been in league with Mr. Close. Was it likely I should have been placed in a room so entirely fitted to his purposes by accident? But I could not imagine any respectable woman

running such a risk of terrifying a child out of his senses, even if she could have connived at his being robbed of what she might well judge unsuitable for his possession.

Descending again to the bed-room, I set to work with my tools. The utmost care was necessary, for the threads were weak with old age. I had only one or two slight mishaps, however, succeeding on the whole better than I had expected. Leaving the door denuded of its covering, I took the patch on my arm, and again sought the library. Hobbes's surprise, and indeed pleasure, when he saw that my plunder not only fitted the gap, but completed the design, was great. I directed him to get the whole piece down as carefully as he could, and went to extract, if possible, a favour from Lady Brotherton.

She was of course very stiff—no doubt she would have called it dignified; but I did all I could to please her, and perhaps in some small measure succeeded. After representing amongst other advantages, what an addition a suite of rooms filled with a valuable library must be to the capacity of the house for the reception and entertainment of guests, I ventured at last to beg the services of Miss Pease for the repair of a bit of the tapestry.

She rang the bell, sent for Miss Pease, and ordered her, in a style of the coldest arrogance, to put herself under my direction. She followed me to the door in the meekest manner, but declined the arm I offered. As we went I explained what I wanted, saying I could not trust it to any hands but those of a lady, expressing a hope that she would not think I had taken too great a liberty, and begging her to say nothing about the work itself, as I wished to surprise Sir Giles and my assistants. She said she would be most happy to help me, but when she saw how much was wanted, she did look a little dismayed. She went and fetched her work-basket at once, however, and set about it, tacking the edges to a strip of canvas, in preparation for some kind of darning, which would not, she hoped, be unsightly.

For a whole week she and the carpenter were the only persons I admitted, and while she gave to her darning every moment she could redeem from her attendance on Lady Brotherton, the carpenter and I were busy—he cleaning and polishing, and I ranging the more deserted parts of the house to find furniture suitable for our purpose. In Clara's room was an old Turkey-carpet which we appropriated, and when we had the tapestry up again, which Miss Pease had at length restored in a marvellous manner—surpassing my best hopes, and more like healing than repairing—the place was to my eyes a very nest of dusky harmonies.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE OLD CHEST.

I cannot help dwelling for a moment on the scene, although it is not of the slightest consequence to my story, when Sir Giles and Lady Brotherton entered the reading-room of the resuscitated library of Moldwarp Hall. It was a bright day of autumn. Outside all was brilliant. The latticed oriel looked over the lawn and the park, where the trees had begun to gather those rich hues which could hardly be the heralds of death if it were the ugly thing it appears. Beyond the fading woods rose a line of blue heights meeting the more ethereal blue of the sky, now faded to a colder and paler tint. The dappled skins of the fallow deer glimmered through the trees, and the whiter ones among them cast a light round them in the shadows. Through the trees that on one side descended to the meadow below, came the shine of the water where the little brook had spread into still pools. All without was bright with sunshine and clear air. But when you turned, all was dark, sombre, and rich like an autumn ten times faded. Through the open door of the next room on one side, you saw the shelves full of books, and from beyond, through the narrow uplifted door, came the glimmer of the weapons on the wall of the little armoury. Two ancient tapestry-covered settees, in which the ravages of moth and worm had been met by skilful repair of chisel and needle, a heavy table of oak, with carved sides, as black as ebony, and a few old, straight-backed chairs were the sole furniture.

Sir Giles expressed much pleasure, and Lady Brotherton, beginning to enter a little into my plans, was more gracious than hitherto.

"We must give a party as soon as you have finished, Mr. Cumbermede," she said; "and——"

"That will be some time yet," I interrupted, not desiring the invitation she seemed about to force herself to utter; "and I fear there are not many in this neighbourhood who will appreciate the rarity and value of the library—if the other rooms should turn out as rich as that one."

"I believe old books *are* expensive now-a-days," she returned. "They are more sought after, I understand."

We resumed our work with fresh vigour, and got on faster. Both Clara and Mary were assiduous in their help.

To go back for a little to my own old chest—we found it, as I have said, full of musty papers. After turning over a few, seeming, to my uneducated eye, deeds and wills and such like, out of which it was evident I could gather no barest meaning without a labour I was not inclined to expend on them—for I had no pleasure in such details

as involved nothing of the picturesque—I threw the one in my hand upon the heap already taken from the box, and to the indignation of Charley, who was absorbed in one of them, and had not spoken a word for at least a quarter of an hour, exclaimed—

"Come, Charley; I'm sick of the rubbish. Let's go and have a walk before supper."

"Rubbish!" he repeated; "I am ashamed of you!"

"I see Clara has been setting you on. I wonder what she's got in her head. I am sure I have quite a sufficient regard for family history and all that."

"Very like it!" said Charley—"calling such a chestful as this rubbish!"

"I am pleased enough to possess it," I said; "but if they had been such books as some of those at the Hall——"

"Look here then," he said, stooping over the chest, and with some difficulty hauling out a great folio which he had discovered below, but had not yet examined—"just see what you can make of that."

I opened the title-page, rather eagerly. I stared. Could I believe my eyes? First of all on the top of it, in the neatest old hand, was written—"Guilfrid Combremead His Boke. 1630." Then followed what I will not write, lest this MS. should by any accident fall into the hands of bookhunters before my death. I jumped to my feet, gave a shout that brought Charley to his feet also, and danced about the empty room hugging the folio. "Have you lost your senses?" said Charley; but when he had a peep of the title-page, he became as much excited as myself, and it was some time before he could settle down to the papers again. Like a bee over a flower-bed, I went dipping and sipping at my treasure. Every word of the well known lines bore a flavour of ancient verity such as I had never before perceived in them. At length I looked up, and finding him as much absorbed as I had been myself—

"Well, Charley, what are you finding there?" I asked.

"Proof perhaps that you come of an older family than you think," he answered; "proof certainly that some part at least of the Moldwarp property was at one time joined to the Moat, and that you are of the same stock a branch of which was afterwards raised to the present baronetage. At least I have little doubt such is the case, though I can hardly say I am yet prepared to prove it."

"You don't mean I'm of the same blood as—as Geoffrey Brotherton!" I said. "I would rather not, if it's the same to you, Charley."

"I can't help it: that's the way things point," he answered, throwing down the parchment. "But I can't read more now. Let's go and have a walk. I'll stop at home to-morrow, and take a look over the whole set."

"I'll stop with you."

"No, you won't. You'll go and get on with your library. I shall do better alone. If I could only get a peep at the Moldwarp chest as well!"

"But the place may have been bought and sold many times. Just look here though," I said, as I showed him the crest on my watch and seal. "Mind you look at the top of your spoon the next time you eat soup at the Hall."

"That is unnecessary quite. I recognize the crest at once. How strangely these cryptographs come drifting along the tide, like the gilded ornaments of a wreck after the hull has gone down!"

"Or, like the mole or squint that reappears in successive generations, the legacy of some long-forgotten ancestor," I said—and several things unexplained occurred to me as possibly having a common solution.

"I find however," said Charley, "that the name of Cumbermede is not mentioned in your papers more than about a hundred years back—as far as I have yet made out."

"That is odd," I returned, "seeing that in the same chest we find that book with my name, surname and Christian, and the date 1630."

"It is strange," he acquiesced, "and will perhaps require a somewhat complicated theory to meet it."

We began to talk of other matters, and, naturally enough, soon came to Clara.

Charley was never ready to talk of her—indeed avoided the subject in a way that continued to perplex me.

"I confess to you, Charley," I said, "there is something about her I do not and cannot understand. It seems to me always as if she were—I will not say underhand, but as if she had some object in view—some design upon you—"

"Upon me!" exclaimed Charley, looking at me suddenly and with a face from which all the colour had fled.

"No, no, Charley, not that," I answered, laughing. "I used the word impersonally. I will be more cautious. One would think we had been talking about a witch—or a demon-lady—you are so frightened at the notion of her having you in her eye."

He did not seem altogether relieved, and I caught an uneasy glance seeking my countenance.

"But isn't she charming?" I went on. "It is only to you I could talk about her so. And after all it may be only a fancy."

He kept his face downwards and aside, as if he were pondering and coming to no conclusion. The silence grew and grew until expectation ceased, and when I spoke again, it was of something different.

My reader may be certain from all this that I was not in love with Clara. Her beauty and liveliness, with a gaiety which not seldom assumed the form of grace, attracted me much, it is true; but nothing interferes more with the growth of any passion than a spirit of ques-

tioning, and that once aroused, love begins to cease and pass into pain. Few, perhaps, could have arrived at the point of admiration I had reached without falling instantly therefrom into an abyss of absorbing passion; but with me, inasmuch as I searched every feeling in the hope of finding in it the everlasting, there was in the present case a reiterated check, if not indeed recoil; for I was not and could not make myself sure that Clara was upright;—perhaps the more commonplace word *straightforward* would express my meaning better.

Anxious to get the books arranged before they all left me, for I knew I should have but little heart for it after they were gone, I grudged Charley the forenoon he wanted amongst my papers, and prevailed upon him to go with me the next day as usual. Another fortnight, which was almost the limit of their stay, would, I thought, suffice; and giving up everything else, Charley and I worked from morning till night, with much though desultory assistance from the ladies. I contrived to keep the carpenter and housemaid in work, and by the end of the week began to see the inroads of order "scattering the rear of darkness thin."

WAR.

I STOOD by night upon a reeking plain,
Among stark stiffened hecatombs of slain,
Who blankly stared into the sullen skies
With glassy, sightless, widely-open eyes.
The night was moonless, dense with stormful cloud,
And muffled all, nor aught to sight allowed,
Save in large livid lightning's ghastly glare
Over the dead men with their awful stare.
Upon a rising ground some ruins riven
Of a burnt village, whence the dwellers driven
Fled from a ravening fire with ne'er a home,
Stand in the cold flame desolate and dumb.
Some curl in attitudes of mortal anguish,
Some with a burning thirst low moaning languish
In their own life-blood, helpless underneath
A heavy horror that hath ceased to breathe.
This form that feels hath hair and beard of grey,
The overlying corse fair curls; but they
Are marred with crimson: this was a fair boy,
Stay of a widowed mother, and her joy;
A tender girl awaits the comely youth,
To whom is plighted all her maiden truth:
These two, late locked in a death-grapple wild—
Might they not be a father and his child,
Lying together very still and mild?
While many a fearful formless mangled thing,
That once was human, blends with littering
Of tumbril-wheel, of cannon-carriage wrack,
Rifle with sword, and soldier's haversack.

But what are these portentous Phantoms tall
That rise before my spirit to appal?
One rides upon a pale colossal horse,
Which, with its head low, sniffs before a corse
And shakes with terror; but the rider swart,
Of supernatural height, of regal port,
Inhales the tainted air with nostrils wide,
And face hard-set in a right royal pride.

One strong red hand a blade, that he has bathed
In a warm living heart, holds reeking; swathed
With giant folds imperially red
His huge mailed body, on the grizzly head
A brazen helm, he dark surveys the dead;
Dilate with cruel unwholesome arrogance
The dictatorial form, the countenance
Swollen with glutted vengeance, things unsweet
As fumes that bloat yon corpses at his feet!
Whence hath the robe drunk purple?—there is hung
A collar of torn hearts that he hath wrung
About his neck, for royal collar slung—
Chains of wrought gold that blaze with many a gem
In snaky twine contorted over them:
His martial plume a swath of foodless grain,
Trodden, or scorched, or sodden with late rain.
Tear-blotted letters from far homes are strown
Under his horse-hoofs, or inanimate blown
Of gusty winds, the words upon them traced
Nearly, like lives of those who wrote, effaced.
He looks the incarnation of old War,
Resembling an imperial conqueror.
  Low thunder with rare intermission growled,
Wherein were mingled cries of wolves that howled:
I saw one straining, gaunt and fiery-eyed,
Held by the king in leash: his awful side
It sprung anon away from fiercely hounded,
And woe is me! who witnessed where it bounded—
A little child in sad astonishment
I had beheld, who with a woman went:
She sought distracted on the fearful plain
One special soldier among all the slain—
That famished wolf was hounded on the pair,
And with fire-fangs it healed a lorn despair!

  An Empire floats a banner,
  Sable, and white, and red,
  Dyed with ravine and famine and plague,
  And blood of the innocent dead!
  Black with pestilence, white with famine, red with the innocent dead!

Yet a more hideous Phantom than the other
Leaned on the War-shape like its own twin brother.
A wan blue mist it seemed to emanate
From where the dead most thickly congregate,

A crawling exhalation, yet anon
A lank tall body with the grave-clothes on:
It trailed and sloped o'er many miles of dead,
Until it reached with a most fearful head
The bosom of the Warrior on the horse,
There leaned fraternal like a month-old corse:
Nay, somewhat otherwise; rather, methought,
It wore aspéct like one most loathsome fraught
With such disease as by beleaguered Metz
Some saw who passed among the lazarettes.
Surely this was incarnate Pestilence!
Yet as I shrank with shuddering from thence,
It wore a face, pale History shall remember
For his who gagged his country one December.
It held in skeleton semblance of a hand
A distaff broken for symbol of command.

Not the Eagle, but the Vulture,
Wheels above him—screaming now:
"I will yield my foul sepulture
To the murdered men below!"
Hoarsely croaks a carrion crow:
"Thou who wert a Pestilence:
Rot abhorred in impotence!"

RODEN NOEL.

Feb., 1871.

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A FESTA IN VENICE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE SACRISTAN'S HOUSEHOLD."

MOST of us have felt, at first sight of some long famous spot, scene, or building, that slight chill of disappointment which testifies to the discrepancy between fact and fancy. Later, in most cases, the disappointment wears off, and we learn to admire as we learn to understand. But there are still in this Europe of ours a few places the reality of whose beauty outstrips expectation, and where we have but to let our eyes drink in the loveliness spread out before them, to be satisfied utterly.

Such a place is Venice. Most exquisite, surely, of all cities made with hands! Many Italian cities are poetic, many are pathetic—as Ferrara, and the silent, sun-flooded Pisa; but which of them unites with the poetic beauty of tangible marble, and intangible memories of the past, the ineffable pathos that broods upon the great waters—the solemn sadness of the sea? None save the Queen of the Adriatic, Venice the Incomparable!

And yet she is far from being gloomy or dreary. Those who saw her in her holiday garb on the 2nd of July, 1871, will own that no spectacle more serenely gay, more softly bright, was ever presented to them. On that day Venice, in common with many sister cities, celebrated the accomplished fact of the transfer of the Italian capital to Rome.

The present writer pretends to no power of political vivisection. He can but paint the surface life of that 2nd of July in Venice, and offers the following little water-colour sketch emboldened by the knowledge that the picture is a faithful one as far as it goes.

The July sun rose up gloriously from the Lagoon into a cloudless sky, and flushed the marble pallor of beautiful Venice, and sparkled in the restless waters, and brightened the countless banners of the Italian tricolor, which fluttered from nearly every window and house-top. All the city had blossomed into red, white, and green. And above all bent the arch of intensely blue Italian summer sky. "A fine festa at last!" said one to another, with a short sigh of relief, and a smiling glance round the horizon. There had been cold and rain and sharp winds during the preceding month, and the saturnine had predicted foul weather for the 2nd, and even the sanguine had trembled a little. But lo! the day was perfect, from beginning to end; and the most determined grumbler could find nothing worse to say than that it was very hot in the sunshine—a truism to which

no one actuated by the prevailing holiday spirit deigned to pay the compliment of a retort.

It was not the tricolor alone that flouted the breeze. (There *was* a breeze, let the grumblers say what they might!) Almost all the little trading vessels moored at the stone quay called the Riva de Schiavoni sported their bunting. A little removed—being of imposing bulk amongst the smaller craft—lay two English steamers, from the "coaly Tyne?" No trace of their black cargo was to be seen. They looked as trim and smart as the best. One was dressed with gay flags up to the mast-head, and both displayed the union-jack. Then there was a rich, solemn-looking, crimson banner, bearing the crescent, which flew above a tiny, picturesque vessel, whose Albanian crew, grave-eyed, with white or red fez, baggy Turkish breeches, and bare, knotty legs, went leisurely about their work on deck under a sail-cloth awning.

What a boundless richness and variety of colour on all sides! These are the glowing tints which the old Venetian painters seized and perpetuated on their canvas. The island of San Giorgio Maggiore, with its tall, slender bell-tower of red brick, topped with cream-white marble, and a conical leaden roof with a burnished golden angel glittering at its apex; the dome-shaped pile of Santa Maria della Salute, looking pearl-grey in the morning light; the faintly rose-coloured mass of the Doge's Palace, with its exquisite marble arcades; the innumerable tints in the rich, weather-stained stone carvings of the princely dwellings on the Grand Canal; everything, down to the burnished neck of the pigeon that peeped and fluttered to be fed upon our window-sill, furnished a feast of colour to the gazing eye, thanks to that bounteous and lordly giver, the blessed sun!

In the Church of St. Mark's—quaint, precious, Byzantine jewel, set in the Italian framework of the Piazza!—there was—I had nearly written "divine service"—there was chanting and bending, and low muttering of the mass, and much coming and going of many feet, and interchangement of soft, polite greetings; not forgetting a deeper and more courteous bow *en passant* to the high altar. Outside, on the quays, and in the narrow alleys (Venetian "calle"), and in the little stone-paved courts, now baking under the sunshine, sellers of fresh water were crying their stock in trade, and lavishing every epithet on it that could incite the thirsty to expend their last centesimo on the cool draught. This cry of "Acqua! Acqua! Buona fresca!" is one that seldom ceases throughout the long summer's day in Venice. The sound of church bells came in wafts across the water from many an islet in the Lagoon, or clanged and jangled near at hand from the tall belfries. A few women of the lower orders, with shawls of more or less smartness, wrapped mantilla-wise over their heads and shoulders, passed along, going to mass or coming from it. Boatmen and gondoliers lounged and

basked in the hot rays until one expected that their brown faces and limbs would positively be baked into the hard terra-cotta which they so much resembled. The irrepressible boys were restless and noisy already. For even at Venice your boy is only so far modified by the influences of the place as to become amphibious, and to enjoy the delight of having two elements, instead of only one, to be mischievous in!

But on the whole the city was quiet. She was waiting. One who knows this country well, and is a true friend to it, has often said to me that there are few things which an Italian will do with less reluctance than waiting. And this trait presents matter for regret in many cases. But on the second of July, eighteen hundred and seventy-one, the nation might reply with an exultant glance at Rome, "We have at least waited to some purpose this time!"

As evening drew on there was a hum and stir perceptible. A very low hum, a very gentle stir. One of the greatest charms of Venice is the absence of jarring noises. There is no rattle of wheels, no clatter of hoofs, not much tread of feet. The gondole glide along with a faint plash! plash! of the oar. All sounds are softened and sweetened by the water. Even the voices of the people are low and pleasant—a very rare quality in Italians. And the soft, lisping accents of the Venetian tongue remind one of the low wash of the tide playing amongst weeds and shells.

At half-past seven, when the sky was flushing pale rose-colour, there was a crowd of gondole on the Grand Canal. The conspicuous object amongst them was a huge barge, gilt, and decorated, and beflagged, and bearing an inscription in gold letters on a sort of shield surrounded with garlands, "Viva Vittorio Emanuele, Re d'Italia Unita!" On this barge was the band of the National Guard, playing national airs; and above all, the Fanfara Reale, or March of the King. As I shall have occasion to mention this "fanfara" frequently, I may as well say at once that it is, as its title imports, a strain of lively military music in the time of a quick march, which is always played on the appearance of the King at any public ceremonial, and has thus become personally associated with the Re Galantuomo.

On went the barge at a slow and stately pace, surrounded and followed by a moving mass, a very shoal of boats of all sorts and conditions. Looked at from the level of one sitting in a gondola, it presented a strange spectacle. The gondoliers, standing high on the poop, with their long oars bending hither and thither, like a field of tall reeds in the wind. Only that instead of one wind, there seemed to be fifty, making the reeds slope to all points of the compass. Seen from a balcony above, the sight must have been charming; for all the folks were in holiday attire, and holiday attire in Italy means all colours of the rainbow, and the gondole were all open, having

taken off their black hoods for the occasion. Every now and then, in the intervals of the music, a voice would cry, "Viva Roma Capitale d'Italia!" "Viva Vittorio Emanuele in Campidoglio!" "Viva Italia libera e unita!" to which the crowd responded with clapping of hands and "Evviva-a-a!" Banners were flying from the windows and balconies on the Grand Canal, and at each patriotic shout, ladies waved their hankerchiefs and men their hats, and little children clapped their hands and joined their shrill pipes to the general cry.

So we struggled on, wedged into the "shoal," and somehow or other succeeded in getting through the archway of the Rialto despite of difficulties which only a Venetian gondolier could overcome. Yet throughout the whole proceeding I did not hear one voice raised in anger. There was not the faintest approach to a row, although the skilful rowers were necessarily incommoded and put out by the mistakes and awkwardness of the less skilful; and so compact was the crowd of boats, that at one time one could easily have walked dry-shod across the Grand Canal. Amongst the gondole, with their high prows and threatening steel *ferri* (the sort of battle-axe familiar to most persons from photographs and models of the Venetian gondola), flitted several tiny canoes, paddled with as much "skill and dexterity" as Tom Tug himself, that "jolly young waterman," could have laid claim to. One of the canoes bore a sail which looked, as did the whole craft indeed, as though it had just left the hands of the toy-maker, and was all a-flutter with bright little strips of banners.

The turning a little below the Rialto, to retrace our course up the Canal, seemed in anticipation a ticklish business; but it, too, was accomplished with the same quietude and apparent ease as all the rest. And now, beautiful as had been the spectacle going down, it was a thousand times more beautiful in returning. For a glorious full moon had arisen by this time, and was lighting the splendid palaces in her own tenderly beautifying way; dwelling on the richness of the decorations and the grandeur of the outlines, and completely ignoring the ruin that Time has wrought among them here and there. At some of the houses a long line of lamps across the façade glowed with a rich golden light. Half-way back from the Rialto, towards the Piazza, the barge stopped, the music ceased, and we rowed along almost as silently as phantom boats upon the moon-lit waters.

Opposite the gardens of the Royal Palace—a mere strip of greenery with a marble balustrade fencing it on the side of the Lagoon—was a new spectacle: a little barque was gliding about with a crimson fire at her prow, which sent a long glowing reflection into the water, side by side with the trembling bluish lines of mirrored moonlight, and had a magically beautiful effect. From an Italian iron-clad in the offing coloured rockets were being sent up at intervals, and Bengal lights made an illumination far and wide. It seemed a sacrifice to

land at the Piazzetta and tread on the stone pavements, so lovely was the seaward view.

But what a crowd of many-coloured figures, what a ceaseless movement, what a hum of voices, persistent and continuous as the sound of a waterfall, when we fairly emerged on the great Piazza of St. Mark! The whole vast space was a blaze of light which glowed even up to the summit of the tall Campanile. There were clusters of lamps like clusters of stars, dotted all about the Piazza. The arcades called the Procuratie, where the jewellers' shops are, were dazzling. Banners hung from every window; companies of boys and young men carrying torches, which gave out the richest crimson light, walked slowly up and down, clearing a path among the people; and the wonderful effects of light and shadow thus obtained are indescribable. Sometimes a great white light would go up and make everything else pale in its intense brilliancy. Sometimes the flame would be as blue as a sapphire. These Bengal lights were burned at the extremity of the Piazza farthest from St. Mark's, and the grand oriental front of the venerable basilica looked in the glare as if it had that instant been erected by the Slaves of the Lamp. The mosaics glistened, the stone carvings showed like petrified tropical plants. The great bronze horses seemed to start forth from their niche over the doorway and paw the air; and, above all, stretched the unfathomable blue depth of sky, with its fair golden moon and quivering white stars.

In the centre of the Piazza was a military band. They had doubtless prepared a programme of music to be executed in due sequence, but they were not destined to carry it out. On this evening the crowd would listen to nothing save the Fanfara Reale. Let the band begin what ear-delighting melody they might, they infallibly had to stop at the end of a few bars and return to the "tra-ra-ra" of the King's March. And no sooner did the well-known strain begin than it was hailed with a shout of rapture, and listened to with as much apparent delight as though the auditors had never heard it in their lives before. Again and again it had to be repeated, the appetite of the crowd being apparently insatiable.

And it must not be supposed that the "crowd" consisted of any such elements as with us go to make up a street mob. Populace there was certainly, and of the poorest. But there were also smart *bourgeois* and *bourgeoises* (and *how* smart were these latter only the editor of a fashion-book could convey an idea; for the fair Venetians had disfigured themselves with humps, and heels, and masses of false hair in the newest mode, and wore dresses of every colour of the rainbow, and sometimes of a great many colours together), there were patricians, and artists, and lawyers, and men of almost every profession under the sun—save the clerical. Of these, I do not remember to have seen one. Every one of the great quantity of seats

before Florian's *café* was filled, every table occupied. All the other less famous *cafés* had also as many customers as they could serve on this occasion. The order and good-humour of the whole assembled mass were absolutely perfect. There was very much more good-breeding than I have often seen in a crowded ball-room. I am afraid it would not be possible to bring together an equal number of the "crême de la crême" who should hustle and stare so little! One heard a great many tongues spoken around—English, French, German, Russian, Greek; but the great majority of the people were Venetians. It was a popular demonstration, spontaneous and unforced as, perhaps, popular demonstrations seldom are. Shout after shout went up for the King, for united Italy, for Rome the capital, and the hero who, whatever his shortcomings, has deserved the utmost love and gratitude of his countrymen, was not forgotten. There was many a hearty "Evviva" for Garibaldi.

Close upon midnight the band moved away from the Piazza, still playing the inevitable Fanfara, and followed by an admiring and enthusiastic crowd. Just before entering their barracks they stopped, and in compliance with many urgent voices played the so-called "Hymn of Garibaldi." It is the melody made familiar to us by the street organs, and of which the burden is—

> "Va fuori d'Italia,
> Va fuori, chè l'ora,
> Va fuori d'Italia,
> Va fuori o stranier!"

"Go hence from Italy, O stranger! for the hour has come!" It used to be sang and played with especial reference to the Austrian dominion in the Peninsula. But now the Austrians are our very good friends on this side the Alps. And circumstances having carried away some other "good friends" (who perhaps were looked upon as being just a trifle in the way in the very core of Italy, notwithstanding the unimpeachable excellence of their intentions), it seems difficult to guess who now remains to be adjured to "audar fuori!"

No; there was no meaning attached to the old "Hymn of Garibaldi" on that July night save the laudable one of honouring the brave and incorruptible soldier whom every Italian must be proud to call countryman. The Italians are now in undisputed possession at home, "in casa loro," and the future seems fair before the nation.

As we walked homeward in the moonlight we looked up at the mystic-winged lion of St. Mark upon his soaring column, and thought that of all the strange, and beautiful, and significant, and important spectacles his winged shadow had fallen on, not the least lovely, characteristic, and fraught with important meanings was the festa which terminated with the distant dying strains of Garibaldi's Hymn.

JEANNE DUPONT.

I.

One evening in the autumn of 1870 there were heavy hearts both in St. Roque and in the little village of Laborde. The demand was everywhere for fresh soldiers. A levy had been raised in St. Roque and its neighbourhood, and the chosen men were already on their way to join the French army.

Baptiste Lenord had been passed over more than once since the beginning of the war; he was the only son of a widowed mother, and war even respects this claim. But defeat and disaster modified rules and overlooked exemptions. The capture of Sedan had given the first shock to the confidence of the people. At this last levy it was asserted that Madame Lenord was stout in health and able-bodied—quite stout enough in health and strength to support herself without the help of her son Baptiste. He could no longer plead exemption on the score of filial duty. So Baptiste went to swell the fast thinning ranks of his comrades. Neighbours said he seemed glad to go away, and they looked curiously at the widow Lenord when she drove her cart into St. Roque three days after his departure, and took up her accustomed place in the market, beneath the flèche of St. Pierre.

But Madelaine Lenord did not mean to afford her neighbours' curiosity any satisfaction. She stood behind the glowing array of fruit and vegetables, as stiff and cold as if nothing had happened to disturb her. No one looking at the square-faced, hard-featured woman in her dark blue gown and black apron would have guessed that her heart was echoing still the measured tramp along the dusty road that led from the caserne eastwards. Her large bony hands did not tremble as she piled orange and green-feathered carrots by purple onions and snowy turnips, or heaped up golden apricots beside bloomy plums. She seemed only intent on selling her goods to the buyers who thronged the market-place.

"Bah! at the next levy it is possible they will put us greybeards in the drawing; is it not so, ma bonne mère?"

Monsieur Jules Dupont, the well-to-do épicier of the Rue St. Jean, stood in front of the stall, and looked up in the face of the widow Lenord. He was forced to look up, she was so tall, and the projecting lilac handkerchief over her stiff-frilled cap added something to her great height.

The little épicier's black eyes twinkled; he rubbed his yellow, skinny

hands lovingly against each other as he glanced upwards. It seemed to him that Madame Lenord's chin entitled her to share in the name greybeard; and, though he repressed a smile at sight of her frowning shaggy eyebrows, he could not keep his enjoyment quite within—it went into his fingers.

"Hein!"—Madame Lenord turned her stiff angular body so as to face the grocer. She looked at him a moment before she went on—"It seems to me, my friend, that you would not be much of a mouthful for one of these Prussian guns they tell us about. Listen"—she put her hand on his arm, for he turned yellow, and was moving on into the crowd that thronged the market-place—"I did not mean to say it if you had kept aloof; but since you are such an old vaurien that you come to see how a mother bears suffering, you must take all you have come for, Monsieur Dupont."

The épicier caught a glance of her kindling eyes.

"My good mother"—he tried to edge his sleeve out of the market-woman's strong, veiny fingers.

No use; she only tightened her grasp, and the self-contented, cunning face lengthened into a look of alarm as those blue steadfast eyes gleamed down more angrily and sternly.

"Listen, I tell you, Jules Dupont. I have known you from a boy; and when I know people, I know the inside as well as the out. I never saw a thought in you which had not self on the top of it, and Jeanne is following in your steps. I warned my boy against her, but young men must always see with their own eyes. I am not grieving for Baptiste"—the proud old lips were pushed up with scorn. "Such a wound as love for Jeanne could give must heal quickly; but, meantime, who knows? my Baptiste may soon be lying in his blood under the feet of the Prussians, and that blood will be on the head of your daughter Jeanne, monsieur." Her voice grew harsher, and the veins on her forehead stood out yet more plainly with the violence of the agitation she restrained, for Madelaine Lenord was too proud to weep before Jules Dupont, and she kept her voice from reaching other ears than the épicier's.

"Gently, gently, my good mother," said Dupont; he was aghast at this attack on such a popular householder as himself, in the midst of his fellow-townsmen.

"I am never gentle, and you know it, Jules Dupont. As well may you seek herbs at the butcher's as gentleness from me. Ask your friend Marie, the dairy-woman, if her yellow cow is more gentle than usual when the butcher leads away her calf to the abattoir. I would cry shame on you if I did not think it was dulness more than malice that brought you here. But you may go." She held him another minute. "What I mean is, that if Jeanne had not made St. Roque hateful to my son, he would have tried for an exemption; but he went like a willing sheep."

She let go her hold of Dupont's arm, and stood still and calm, not even looking towards the grocer. Dupont went on a few paces as if in rebound from her grasp; then he stopped, and brushed the sleeve she had held with the coat-cuff of the other. He made a grimace and walked back to Madelaine's fruit-stall with a sort of dance in his step.

"You are a woman," he smiled, and rubbed his hands harder than ever; "and women are so often mistaken in judging. Is it not quite possible, my good woman, that Baptiste is tired of petticoat government, and anxious to try a little soldiering for a change?"

He spoke in a loud voice, and several idlers pressed up to the fruit-stall. The old woman's lips trembled, and she pressed them tight to steady them; then she took a long look at the sneering, wrinkled, yellow face.

"If I am a woman, I can't help it," she said. "You can't help being a man, Jules Dupont; but you can help being a coward!"

A chorus of applause from the group round her was too much for the respectable épicier. He got very red, he left off rubbing his hands, and glared for an instant at Madelaine; then he shrugged his shoulders, and was soon out of sight in the crowded market-place.

II.

Monsieur Dupont's shop is in the principal street of St. Roque; the house above it is among the few which have escaped improvement, and the projecting gable a-top nods in close proximity to its opposite neighbour. Monsieur Dupont's is not a showy shop seen from the street, though when you get inside it you are at once impressed with the fastidious neatness of its arrangements.

There is a glass-door at the end of the shop, and looking through this you see a pretty little room. The walls are pale green; the window is shaded by fresh muslin curtains. A gilt looking-glass rests on a marble table, and on this table are fuchsias and choice pinks in flower-pots. Near the table, with her back to the window, Jeanne Dupont is sitting at her embroidery-frame. She stoops over her work, hiding her face, but showing the smooth plaits of her glossy brown hair. Jeanne has not a well-shaped head, but towards the forehead it is full and broad, and it is well placed on her shoulders.

She startles as her father comes into the shop. She knows his fidgety, small-stepping tread, and she looks up. Jeanne is not pretty; she has a bright brown skin, with a rich colour glowing under her dark eyes; but her mouth is wide, and her nose turns up at the end with that peculiar expression of sauciness, hastiness, and good nature, so inseparable from this conformation. The expression at this moment is unmistakably cross.

The glass door opens, and Monsieur Dupont comes in, and seats himself on the red velvet sofa opposite his daughter.

"Eh bien, Jeanne! I have news for thee. He rubs his hands, and

half shuts his bead-like eyes. "Madelaine Lenord is not in a complimentary mood to-day. She says—the old toad!—that Baptiste was glad to get away from St. Roque because at the same time he got away from thee."

At the name Baptiste the girl's mouth trembled, and her eye-lashes drooped and quivered; but the bitter ending of Madelaine's message was too much. Jeanne's eyes flashed open in bright wrath, and her nose turned up yet more than usual.

"Madame Lenord is well set to work"—she spoke so fast that she could hardly get her words out. "Did she say that in the open market?"

"But—yes"—Monsieur rubbed his hands, and looked still more cheerful; "and our good neighbours here in St. Roque, and also out at Laborde, are no doubt kind enough to pity poor deserted Jeanne Dupont."

"Chut!" Jeanne stamped her foot imperiously, and then she sat still, twining her plump brown fingers together as if she were trying to plait them into some pattern. Monsieur fidgeted a little with two old-fashioned seals which hung at his watch-chain. He began to whistle softly, as if to himself, "Mourir pour la Patrie." Jeanne's brown skin grew suffused, and her eyes looked up full of angry fire.

"Father!" This came as an exclamation, and it seemed to act as warning to Monsieur Dupont. He left off whistling and playing with his seals, and looked gravely at his daughter. "Thou hadst best not rouse my temper. I know thou art trying to make me say I will marry Victor Devisme. Eh bien, voyons!" She got up and stood beside her high-backed low chair, grasping the rail a-top with all the strength of her well-shaped hands. "I have not said No—I will not promise to say Yes; but thou shalt not taunt me into anything." She stood thinking. Her father watched her, closing his eyes till they looked like black slits. "Madelaine Lenord must indeed have changed if she could speak so cruelly," she said, more quietly. "Father, art thou sure——"

A sob came in the girl's throat, but she choked it back.

Monsieur Dupont laughed in the low chuckling way that was inseparable from his favourite pastime of rubbing his hands.

"I blame thee not, Jeanne; but thou needest not be so ready to catch fire. Never believe what thou dost not like, my child—it is a safe motto. I object not to thy disbelief—why should I? I am quite willing to be convicted if I have not told the truth. Go to the market-place, my girl—there is yet time—and get the truth from Madelaine herself."

Jeanne bit her lips, and tears came to soften the hard light in her eyes.

"Father, there are times when I have wished—may the Holy Virgin forgive me, but I must wish it all the same—that thou couldest just for one hour, or less even, be cursed with my wild

spirit; it may be thou wouldst then show mercy at a time like this. Thou canst not in earnest wish me to suffer this public mortification. Why, then, say words which make me mad and wicked?" Dupont fidgeted under her earnest eyes. "Listen," she went on; "thou hast bid me go to Madelaine. I will see her, and have the truth from her, but not in the market-place."

Monsieur sat looking like a Japanese image; his thin, loose lips had relaxed from the grin which usually kept them strained into a line, and the lowermost hung down in open dismay. He had seen Jeanne petulant, vehement even, but she had never spoken with this highly-wrought earnestness. Her eyes did not flash; there was more of sorrowful appeal than of passion in her words.

She pinned the paper down over her embroidery, and passed out of the room, but Jules Dupont still sat with the same dismayed look on his wrinkled face. He had no moustache to hide the working of his mouth; he had very little hair even on his head, and the yellow skin on his bare crown likened him, in conjunction with his wide lipless mouth, to an unfledged thrush.

"What has she?" and then his black sharp eyes went inquisitively into every corner, as if to find a clue to Jeanne's new behaviour. "Bah! it is time I was rid of her. She must be married without delay. She is a fire-brand. My digestion is disturbed by her vehemence. She has not said No to my propositions; she is too well brought up to refuse a husband chosen for her by her father; and, ma foi"—he struck one hand energetically into the palm of the other—"what can she find to object? Bah! I did not think I had struck so hard." He caressed his injured palm as if it were some pet animal. "She cannot make an objection to Victor Devisme. He has good looks, a good position, good manners. It is impossible that Jeanne can prefer a mere carpenter like Baptiste Lenord to a gentleman. Why, Victor has dined at the Préfecture. Baptiste is a great overgrown lout, without looks or manners."

The épicier pulled a little file out of his pocket, and proceeded to trim his nails. Mechanically he again whistled, "Mourir pour la Patrie."

III.

There is a long hilly street in St. Roque, with lime-trees on each side. It is almost in a line with the spires of St. Etienne; and it mounts upwards at a right angle with the street in which the famous old cathedral stands, till at its furthest extremity you get a glimpse of the tower of the Abbaye aux Dames. Some way up this hill you come upon a lonely, desolate-looking spot. Grey, quaint houses, chiefly untenanted, stand ghost-like about a large grass plot, with rows of chestnuts along its edges; and behind, shadowed by this dense foliage, and paved all round with hard obtrusive grey stones, is the little lonely church of St. Julien.

A young girl goes by the church with a rapid swinging walk. She stops and looks at the little grey building.

"Father Pierre would tell me what to do," Jeanne sighed, and faltered. There was a chapter of unspoken, unsifted trouble in the steadfast brown eyes.

She was not long undecided.

"I will see Madelaine first," and on she went again.

Looking at Jeanne in her close-fitting black silk gown and simple straw bonnet with its white trimmings, she seemed indeed too refined for a carpenter's wife.

Her mother had been very superior to Jules Dupont, and she had lived long enough to place Jeanne in the convent, where she had been taught more than usually falls to the lot of girls of her class. The usual result had followed. Jeanne disdained the female society she mixed among and its frivolity. She cared far more for reading and refined pursuits than for dress and fashion; and she had scandalised a group of shopkeepers' daughters by asserting that Madelaine Lenord, in her simple market cloak and cap, was more of a lady than any of these flounced and panniered demoiselles.

Jeanne has one friend nearer her own age than Madame Lenord—her former music-mistress at the convent, Mademoiselle Félicité Trudin—but she is never in St. Roque at this time of year; she goes to stay with her old mother at Dives.

"If I could only see Mademoiselle Félicité," the girl goes on to herself, "I believe she would give me good advice. I used to wonder at that sweet sad depth in her eyes; now I know that is the mark love leaves behind him. Ah! when a woman's eyes are only bright and fiery, she knows nothing of real love."

Jeanne has a long weary walk on the dusty road before the diligence overtakes her. She wishes to go the whole way on foot, but this will take too long; she must be home again before dusk; so she gets into the empty vehicle, and is almost smothered by the dust it raises. On between hedges, giving glimpses of orchards jewelled with rich-hued crops; below, stubble on the ground—the iron foot of war had not yet trodden down these remains of wheat and barley harvest—for the thrifty Normans turn orchard ground to double use.

By degrees the trees grow scanty and stunted, the herbage on the hedge banks coarser, till at last the sand-hills come in sight, and the diligence stops at a cross-road.

Jeanne pays her fare, and then turns down the left of the cross-roads. A few minutes bring her to the sandy country about Laborde. It stretches on beyond the village, a waste of sand and blue mud-hills, till these last assume a more regular aspect, and, in the shape of a range of low cliffs, bound the plage of the fishing-cabins of Dives.

Jeanne looks wistfully on towards the sea; but Dives is far away

from Laborde. She cannot reach it to-day, she has only time to see Madelaine Lenord.

The cottage is just like all the rest—whitewashed, with a black door, a shingled roof, and a queer little dormer window peeping out among circling vine sprays and stone-crop, as if it was there on guard. Jeanne knows the cottage well. Her mother used to take her out to Laborde on summer afternoons, and then it was that she and Baptiste Lenord made acquaintance. He was learning his trade in his own village in those days, and had got good book teaching from Monsieur le Curé. He had not begun then to work for Monsieur Carmier, the chief ébeniste of St. Roque.

The girl's face changed rapidly in expression. She stood still at the door, without knocking.

"I will try and be patient; but it was shameful to say such a thing out in the market-place."

And then came a quick throb of pain—that pain that seems filled with prophetic instinct, telling it is only a herald of worse to come, so hard to bear, because we know it is self-inflicted. Jeanne had been wilful, rebellious all her life; but she had all her life been resolving to turn over a new leaf, and nothing serious had come of her frequent relapses; and now, just when she had only had a little quarrel with her lover, when she had been less passionate than usual, and when, in thinking over the cruel words she had said to Baptiste, it had seemed that a few days must make all right, the terrible summons had come, and Baptiste had gone away, it might be for ever.

"It is all the fault of the war. I said I did not love him, and I did not know I loved him so much. I did not think this torment would have come in my heart, or I would have asked him to forgive me on my knees. And he has gone without a word or a look!"

Jeanne looked indignant at her own weakness, and drew up her head, while she tapped at the door.

No one answered.

"She is perhaps out," and Jeanne lifted the latch.

Madelaine Lenord looked up in an instant, defiance in her face. The sight of Jeanne standing in the doorway had brought some of it, and the rest came from the consciousness of tears, and the swollen eyelids, which had been hidden between the old woman's hands.

Madelaine sat still; she did not move her elbows off her knees, but she raised her head till it rested against the wall behind her, and looked steadily at Jeanne.

Wrought up as the girl was in the hush of those few moments, she saw, without noticing, how clean and spotless the wall looked, and the glitter of the few brass pans that hung against it.

Madelaine spoke first.

"Like father, like child. So, Jeanne Dupont, you've come now—is

it not so?—to see how I grieve for the loss of my son. Why should I not grieve?" Her voice grew harsh as she looked at the face that had come between her and her boy. "A mother must be harder than a brute if she does not grieve to lose her own child; no triumph for you in that, mademoiselle."

Jeanne came forward suddenly, and took the widow's hand between hers. Madelaine drew it away.

"But, madame, do not be hard—do listen; has he not, then, left one word for you to say to me?"

Jeanne forgot that Baptiste's mother had no belief in her own love for him. She forgot everything but her longing to know whether her lover had forgiven her, and the old woman's harshness filled her with a bitter sense of injustice.

Madelaine rose up slowly; she seemed to tower above the quivering, dark-eyed Jeanne. The girl had clasped her hands together; she stood in the attitude of a suppliant. But the stern old woman utterly misread her purpose.

"I thought you were selfish, Jeanne Dupont, but not so bad as this. You trifle with an honest lad's heart, because he is weak enough to feed your pride, and then you drive him from you with your bitter, heartless words. And you are daring enough to come and ask me at this hour if Baptiste is spaniel enough to cringe and fawn for your pity, to leave tender words and tokens for such as you! No, mademoiselle, your name was not spoken by my son. I said, 'What of Jeanne Dupont?' and he answered me, 'Be silent, my mother.' It was easy to see that he rejoiced in leaving St. Roque; he wished to escape the sight of you."

"Ah!"

The glow that had risen on the girl's dark cheeks faded, her hands fell apart and drooped beside her. Was not this the confirmation of her father's words?

"You are unjust—one day you will see how unjust. I came to tell you I was sorry to have caused his departure; but you throw my words back."

"Ta, ta, ta!" Madelaine looked scornful. "You make too much of Baptiste's sorrow, mademoiselle. Go home and grieve for your own pride and vanity; do not grieve for my son; you offended him—that was all. By this time he has forgotten you, Jeanne Dupont. He will come back; he will laugh that you could ever have had power to vex him. My son is not to be thrown away on a brown little chit of a vixen."

Perhaps Madame Lenord had surprised herself by her own sternness, or she may have felt unable to persist in it. She went to the door, and opened it for the girl to pass out.

Jeanne looked up at her, and went away without a word.

IV.

Monsieur Dupont stood at his shop-door. The street was quieter than it had been in time of peace; the market folk had gone home long ago; there was not left so much as a barrowful of plums. Opposite was the shop window of Monsieur Le Petit, with its shining plaits of hair and bottles of perfume and pomade; the gable a-top of the three-storied house projected its quaintly-carved head as if it wanted to see into the street below. The house itself projected slightly, and thus narrowed in the street so as to form a closer fitting frame to the grey old St. Pierre, which filled the end of it.

Monsieur Dupont was not smoking—the habit, in his opinion, was an unclean one, and his great virtue was a spotless cleanliness; the care of his finger-nails and of his small remnant of hair was an absorbing employment; his dress, too, gave token, by its frequent variety in the way of waistcoats and neckties, of the attention bestowed on it.

"Dress," he observed, "costs money to purchase, time and taste to wear to the best advantage; and money and good taste are the only two things worth living for. How foolish and reckless, then, to taint and soil that which has so much value, by a saturation of poisonous smoke."

Moreover, Monsieur Dupont considered that eyes were given one to use in observing the conduct and fortunes of one's fellow-men, and he perhaps saw much more out of those bead-like eyes of his as he stood at his shop-door, each thumb in a waistcoat pocket, his feet drawn closely into the first position, bowing and smiling to almost all who passed him, than he would have seen if he had been smoking.

"Aha, my friend Victor! It is long, then, since you have come down the Rue St. Jean."

"Bon soir, monsieur."

The new-comer raised his hat, and stood still, with rather a sheepish, hesitating look.

Monsieur Victor Devisme was a clerk in the bureau of Monsieur le Préfet of St. Roque, and consequently, in such troublous times, a man of more importance than the wealthy épicier. He had a pleasant face—Belgian rather than French. Good, honest blue eyes, sunny, chestnut hair and beard, went well with his fresh, high-coloured complexion. He was taller than the épicier, but he was still only medium height. The cunning face of Jules Dupont did not show to advantage beside his frank, pleasant-looking companion.

"Well but, my friend"—the épicier looked slyer than ever—"you have not answered. Why is it, then, so long since you have come to see an old friend?"

The young man's colour deepened.

"Aha!"—monsieur winked his sly eye, and his mouth curved

into a grin of intense enjoyment,—"We understand. Is it not so? It was better, was it not, to give the papa time to arrange a little matter for us with mademoiselle?" He rubbed his hands and chuckled till Victor longed to choke him.

"Well, Monsieur Dupont, and what have you to say to me?" He spoke so sharply that monsieur vibrated on the points of his toes in sudden, nervous tremor, though he laughed, to show how very much at ease he felt; and as Victor Devisme did not feel in a laughing mood, it seemed to him that his companion—even though he was the father of Jeanne Dupont—was a wrinkled old idiot.

"Aha, that is what it is!" The frown on Victor's face quickened Monsieur Dupont's sentence. "Well, my good friend, my news is not much to tell; I have spoken to my daughter, and I have reason to believe the next step is to present you to her."

Victor left off frowning, but he did not look content.

"But, Monsieur Dupont, you know what I mean. Have you ascertained that Mademoiselle Jeanne will receive me with satisfaction?"

The earnest feeling in his face might almost have moved Jules Dupont; but he did not look up; his attention was concentrated on the polish of one of his little finger-nails.

"Ma foi!"—his shoulders went towards his large ears—"What will you? I have done my part. You can do yours, I suppose, without my help? Come again this evening. Jeanne will be at home, and will be ready to receive you from me as her future husband. Allons."

Victor Devisme lingered. He could not believe the épicier's news. Jeanne Dupont had always been civil to him, but she had been cold too. He would have given much for one of the flashes of petulance he had seen her bestow on his sister Thérèse—flashes which had gained her from that staid spinster the name of vixen.

Frenchman though he was, Victor was too much in love not to crave a little more romance in his wooing than he felt assured of finding.

"I shall know this evening how she really feels," he thought. "Jeanne's is a tell-tale face. She is no hypocrite."

It seemed to the young man, who had till now led the monotonous and uneventful life of an official in a provincial town, that existence was turning into a fairy tale. As he reached the end of the street, he said to himself, "But it will spoil all to be obliged to ask Jeanne in the presence of her father;" and suddenly he turned the corner of the Rue Notre Dame, and there was Jeanne herself—Jeanne who, instead of passing him with a graceful, self-possessed bow in return for his shy salutation, flushed deeply at sight of him, and stopped when he paused beside her.

"Mademoiselle"—his voice was eager and trembling, it went to the girl's aching heart at once—"I have received permission from

Monsieur your father to present myself at your house this evening. Have I also your permission, Mademoiselle?"

Jeanne bent her head; tears were coming into her eyes, and she did not want Devisme to see them.

"Yes, yes, Monsieur Victor;" she forced her lips into a smile, and hurried on past the angle of the street.

"Am I asleep or dreaming?" Victor rubbed his eyes, and then, as a girl with faggots on her head nearly knocked his hat off, he decided that he was awake, and that he was happier than he had ever been in his life before. Yes, the fairy tale had begun.

It was well for the growth of this sudden happiness that Jeanne reached home while Monsieur Dupont had crossed over the way to advise with his crony, Madame Le Petit. A hare had been presented to her—a gift in which the épicier, who loved his stomach as much as he loved every bit of himself, was resolved to share, and he had gone to Madame Le Petit to devise the best way of cooking it.

Jeanne took off her bonnet at the foot of the steep stairs, and swung it by the strings backwards and forwards as she mounted. She was asking herself why she was so foolish, so weak.

"Why should I grieve and crave for a love which never can be mine—which perhaps I never had, or I could not have lost it for just a few foolish, passionate words? Here is a man good and true, and loving too—whose eyes show me what I am to him. Why should I not make Victor Devisme happy? I can never be happy in the way I dreamed of; that is over. Why not trust that happiness may come with a man who I am certain loves me so much?"

V.

Days went by—so many, that they were weeks now; autumn had grown chill. The war was still raging fiercely. Victor Devisme was betrothed to Jeanne Dupont; but life was not quite the fairy tale he had begun to think it.

His sister Thérèse shook her head. It was no wonder, she said, that Victor looked downcast. In such troubled times, when the war grew worse every day, instead of coming to the glorious ending that had beeen promised, when even to far-off St. Roque news of defeat and the death of the townsmen came weekly—how could folks have the heart to think of love and marriage? For her part, Thérèse thanked the Holy Virgin and the saints she was not troubled with such nonsense; she thought the occupation of women should be praying and fasting at such a time. Marriage was quite out of season.

Perhaps Thérèse was right. Joy jars in a public grief; and though in Normandy there was yet a strong belief in the ultimate triumph of the French arms, still rumours of defeat and disaster grew. No

one could say how hearts grew heavier; folk went about with saddened faces, and not all the proclamations and bland self-complacency of Monsieur le Préfet could dispel the gloom that began to brood over the town of St. Roque.

Jeanne was one of the first to feel its influence; she had rarely smiled since the evening when her father placed her hand in that of Victor Devisme. In one way she was grateful to the war. The duties of her lover's office had grown much heavier during these last days, and Victor could only spend a few minutes with her each time he came, and, with a pertinacity which irritated him, Jeanne always contrived that her father should be present.

Marie, the milk-woman, a good-natured, gossiping Picarde, told Jeanne one day that a letter had come to his mother from Baptiste.

"He is not far off"—her small black eyes shone with significance—"not farther than Rouen. Dame! What do I know, he may be nearer still."

Marie's flat brown face broadened into one huge smile. She stood looking at Jeanne with both hands resting on her hips, or at least on the breadth of blue-plaited woollen which represented them.

Marie was an outspoken body. All the world of St. Roque had heard of the love between Baptiste Lenord and Jeanne Dupont; and though Mamzelle Jeanne had been hard-hearted enough to give Baptiste his congé, and was going to marry a gentleman, she might show a little interest in hearing about the poor fellow.

"And instead, ciel! she looks as proud as Madame Mérand herself, ma foi!" Up went the milk-woman's shoulders towards her ear-drops.

"Good morning, Marie"—Jeanne was turning out of the kitchen where the talk had been held—"I will send Sophie to you."

"Wait, mamzelle." Marie considered that if Jeanne had grown unfeeling, it was her simple duty to make her know it. It was said in St. Roque that Marie, the milk-woman, spent quite as much of her time in teaching her neighbours as in selling milk, and reaped more "kicks than halfpence" in her philanthropic endeavours; but she had never before administered advice to Jeanne Dupont.

"Has mamzelle heard the talk in the town this day?"

"I never listen to gossip." Jeanne kept her face turned towards the kitchen door.

"Gossip, ma foi! and mamzelle speaks of gossip, when it is our men's lives I mean! There is news of fighting near us, mamzelle. No one knows where the news began, but every one says so. It is quite near; not far off, at least, they say. Ah, mamzelle! it is well for you who have no friends in the army; but for me, I have many friends there. The poor lads, I love them. I care for poor Baptiste Lenord. Ma foi, I think so!—he with his bright, black eyes and cheerful smile—it is all that is most sad—to think of him dead and cold, trodden

under the feet of those cursed Prussians. They are cursed; they drink the blood of our men, and steal the food of our children. Dame, if I were then a man, I would make some of the butchering cowards bleed too!"

"Who told you this news?"

Marie stood with open mouth and eyes. Jeanne Dupont had turned round suddenly, and had taken a firm grasp of the milk-woman's arm, as if she thought she would run away.

"Who told you our soldiers were fighting near St. Roque?"

Jeanne spoke doggedly, and she shook Marie's arm.

"Dame! that is what I have but now said to mamzelle—there is a rumour. What will you? Does any one know how a rumour begins? It is like a mushroom; no one can say from whence it comes. It may be no more than—pouf"—she blew across the back of her hand, as if she saw a feather there—"but it may be true. Ciel! think, then, a little, my fine young lady, of the brave fellows we saw marching away to the sound of the drum. When I think that none of us, not even his mother, will ever again see Baptiste Lenord, my heart is like to burst. Ah, mon Dieu, but it is the most unhappy chance! He was good. Ah, the poor lad!"

Marie put her black apron to her eyes. Jeanne waited a minute, and then she spoke calmly.

"There have been these rumours once—twice even—and they have not proved true, Marie. There has, perhaps, been some truth as to the fighting, but it has always been farther off than was said, and our townsmen have not been engaged in it. Only a fortnight ago you said the Prussians were close to Rouen."

"Ma foi!"—Marie's face was flushed with her eagerness to speak—"and what is it, mademoiselle, a fortnight now, a fortnight to come, in a war which goes on from bad to worse? It is only a question of days and of suspense. It is all very well what they say at the Préfecture—that the Prussians will have to cry 'Vive la République.' Chut!"—she snapped her fingers. "Mademoiselle must of course believe what is said at the Préfecture; it is natural, if it is not just, and it has become the duty of mademoiselle. But Monsieur Le Petit has a friend at Versailles, and he has written Monsieur Le Petit that the King of these monsters of Prussians is not a man at all, but a demon, and he will never go back to Berlin till he is master of all France. Ah! but mamzelle, it is infamous. The old coquin, I could strangle him myself if he were only a man."

Marie wiped away her tears impetuously. Jeanne stood thinking. She did not love Victor Devisme, but his calm self-possession claimed her respect, and he had taught her to believe in the wisdom of the ruling powers. Yet though St. Roque had been kept ignorant at the outset of the state of public affairs, each day was forcing on the minds of its citizens two plain facts, which came always in unison—the

constant defeat and disaster of the French troops, and the steady success of their enemies, spite of enormous losses. So much of private interest had been distracting Jeanne's thoughts, that she had not realised, as many of her fellow-townswomen had realised, that actual war was approaching their city, and that each one of them might be brought face to face individually with its horrors. She grew white suddenly.

"Then, if this news is true, the enemy will march west; they may come to St. Roque?"

"Monsieur Le Petit says they will not reach us till they are sure of Rouen and Havre. Bah! Mademoiselle, if they come here, what can we do? We have no walls at St. Roque. They will eat us up like sheep. How can mamzelle think of such a horror? It is bad enough that our men should die for us without dying ourselves. Hark, mamzelle!"

The kitchen was near the end of a passage leading into the street. There was a continued tramp of feet, and overpowering these sounds came the *Marseillaise* ringing its soul-stirring music to this refrain—

> "Aux armes contre l'étranger,
> Tous les Français sont Volontaires,
> Quand la Patrie est en danger."

"It is nothing." Jeanne had recovered herself. "You know we have heard it before—only some recruits going to the caserne on their way to join the army. They can give no news. They come from the other side—from Rennes, perhaps."

"Dame, but they may know; it was a soldier, mamzelle, who told me how that wicked old king shuts himself up with Bismarck and that old sorcerer Moltke, and makes charms with the blood of children —*our* children, mamzelle Jeanne. Tiens! have I not lived in Brittany, and have I not heard of the monster of Laval? and I say to you that he has come to life again in our day. Monsieur Le Petit has well said that the old coquin of Prussia should offer thanks, not to God, but to the devil—for it is Satan who is the Providence of that old sorcerer and of Bismarck."

"Was it Monsieur Le Petit who told you this news about a battle?" Jeanne asked faintly.

"No, mademoiselle, I heard it in the market; and I looked for Madelaine Lenord, but I could not find her. She does not come to St. Roque on every market-day since she lost her boy. She used to come to see Baptiste. Hein! but, mamzelle, it was a sad day when he went away, poor boy!"

This time Jeanne did not give any warning of departure—she went straight out of the kitchen and up to her own room. She closed the door and stood against it, trying to keep down agitation.

"I am foolish. I know this woman for a chatterbox and unscru-

pulous in what she says. She may have invented this rumour—then why do I let my thoughts rest on it?" She pressed her slender hand over her eyes; they were hot and dry. "It is true, I feel it. I can't shut it out. I see only him, my Baptiste, lying there bleeding to death—mine—Ah, mon Dieu! have I not lost the claim to him?" She stood still, and presently she went on again. "I had not thought he would die; I thought only he would despise me, and he would marry some one else. It seemed to me, if I could fill my head with Victor Devisme, I should be safe—I should be a wife—I should not then die of jealousy in seeing Baptiste happy with some one else than me. Ah! how little I knew! and now, what has happened!" Both hands clasped her face, but the burning blushes spread and revealed themselves on the full brown throat, panting with the love that had been so cruelly restrained. "Ah, mon Dieu!—it happens thus. I am truly punished. I detest the sight of Victor, I shrink at the sound of his voice, and I love my darling more than ever. My Baptiste, my own well-beloved, if I could only once tell thee I have been true, though I seemed false! But he will die, and I shall never see him."

That evening, when Victor Devisme came to the Rue St. Jean, he was surprised at the change in Jeanne. She was no longer silent and reserved, she questioned him about the Government, about the position of the troops, the hopes of success; and when he had given the desired information, she scandalised him by her want of patriotism.

"It is a mistake to go on with this dreadful war," she said. "We have got rid of the Emperor—I do not know what harm he did, but I am willing to believe he began this war wrongly. But if he were wrong, why do we imitate him? why do we fight against fate? why sacrifice all our men to these Germans, who are too strong for us?"

Even Jules Dupont's cynicism stirred at this.

"Ta-ta-ta! thou art a woman! But was France ever conquered? What do I say? Has she not always triumphed? And is it possible that a herd of brutal beer-swilling peasants should trample on the bravery which has been renowned since the days of Charlemagne? Ma foi! Jeanne, it is too much! Why, the armies are preparing to march on Paris and unite forces; and then, where will be the triumph of the barbarians? Hemmed in between our soldiers and the city, they will not be allowed to escape—they will perish miserably, trampled under the feet of our advancing braves."

Monsieur Dupont rubbed his hands softly together as he rounded off these words, but Jeanne did not listen; she was stitching at her embroidery as if her life depended on the number of leaves she added to her roses. Victor Devisme lingered and lingered, but she had no more words to give him. Her hand lay passive in his when he bade her good-night. She made no attempt at reply to the warm clasp in which he held her fingers.

VI.

Two days passed. Victor came to the Rue St. Jean on the second evening. He found Monsieur Dupont drinking orgeat in the little parlour behind the shop, his yellow face wrinkled as he pored over a map.

Devisme answered the épicier's questions as to the day's news at the Préfecture, and then he looked restless.

"Where is Jeanne?"

"Ma foi!"—the épicier grinned till his face resembled a shrunken orange—"she has a headache; she has been in her room all day; but you can ask Sophie if she will see you."

Devisme went into the passage, but he met Sophie coming downstairs. Mademoiselle had sent her to say she was not coming down to-night. Mademoiselle had headache; she was going to bed. She had forbidden that any message should be sent her. Sophie gave this last part of the message with severe emphasis. For the first time since he had been accepted as Jeanne's lover Victor's pride rose. It was evident that Jeanne wished to avoid him; and ever since that parting, two nights ago, the young man's heart had been filled with an aching longing. His suit made no progress; he was no surer of Jeanne's love than he had been at the beginning. He had resolved to appeal to Jeanne, and ask her why she had promised to be his wife if she had no intention of satisfying the love which consumed him. He loved her so much, that hope was strong in him; and even while his heart ached, there had been a wild thrill of delight at the vision of all that this appeal might lead to, for Victor had determined to ask Monsieur Dupont for his absence. He believed that if he had found courage to do this earlier, he and Jeanne might have come to a better understanding than was possible under the sneering, observant eyes of the épicier. He had come to the shop full of this resolve, and now all his hopes were dashed to the ground and shattered by such a message.

He turned from Sophie haughtily, and went out of the house without going to bid Monsieur Dupont good evening.

Sophie put her head on one side. She was a small thin creature, who adored her young mistress and snubbed her old master alternately. She looked on Monsieur Devisme as an ally of the grocer, and therefore an unsuitable match.

"Hein!" she said, "they say love is blind; it seems that love has made that young clerk blind and stupid too. Why, mamzelle gets paler every day; she hates the very sight of him—the staring owl. When it was Baptiste Lenord, ma foi! she was like sunshine. Why did she take this one, ma foi! I know not. It is not to be believed that a young demoiselle should give scandal by changing one lover for another, and then not please herself after all."

But Sophie was different from Marie the milk-woman. Sophie was old, and a Parisian born, and she knew that a girl crossed in love must be left to battle with her own heart in peace.

Jeanne's swollen eyelids did not tell of a peaceful night. She came down next morning later than usual, and she gave such sharp, irritable answers that her father was glad to escape into his shop. He told Sophie that he should not be in for dinner, and that she must wait on customers, if any came in, after five o'clock.

Jeanne felt relieved when she heard of her father's absence. She dreaded inquiries and rebukes for her avoidance of Victor. She had not yet decided how to act, and she felt that interference would rouse her into vehemence.

Monsieur Dupont's was a corner house, and the windows of the little parlour at the back of the shop looked into a side street. Jeanne stood by the open window in the vacant state that so surely follows great mental suffering. Her eyes were fixed on the white wall of a house opposite—a whitewashed, bare space, with green *persiennes* on the first floor. She stood some minutes gazing, but, seeing nothing, she could not have said the house before her was white or black; and then, before any object darkened the bare blank space, a slight shiver ran through Jeanne, and her vision came back. Came back, and seemed fixed, so intense was the straining gaze, on a figure—a man, seemingly a drunkard, for he staggered forward, then sideways, on the round knobbed pavement, and at last flung up his arms and reeled against the white wall with a groan.

"Au secours, Sophie, au secours!"

That was all Jeanne said; and then she sprang on a chair, and let herself drop into the side street from the open window. She saw no one else; she clasped both arms round the fainting man and kissed him.

"My own—own Baptiste!"

But Baptiste did not know her. His head drooped on her shoulder; he seemed changing into lead; instead of supporting him, Jeanne felt that she must sink on the pavement beneath his weight.

"Parbleu! Leave him there, mamzelle. He is not women's work as he stands there. Voyons, voyons, friend Baptiste! Stand up. What is it? Lend a hand, then, Ferdinand."

It was fortunate for Monsieur Le Petit that the tall garçon of the Hôtel Sainte Barbe was passing by. The hairdresser's own round squat figure, spite of its strength, must have been overbalanced by the inert frame of the young soldier.

"Bien," said Ferdinand glibly. "I hold him; and what is then to be done with him, monsieur?"

Jeanne had disengaged herself from Baptiste, but she stood close by.

"Monsieur Le Petit, he is dying! you will take him into your house? He should come in here"—she pointed across the way—"but you

know my father; and, then, your door is quite at hand. He shall be no trouble to you; I will nurse him. Oh, monsieur, you will not leave him to die in the street—Baptiste, whom you have known all his life!" There was agony in her voice.

Monsieur Le Petit's face became ludicrous. He had a secret admiration for Jeanne Dupont, and a hearty liking for Baptiste Lenord; but he had a strict regard for "les convenances" and a most wholesome awe of his wife. He knew that Madame Le Petit had aided and abetted her gossip, Jules Dupont, in making the match between Jeanne and Victor Devisme. She had denounced Baptiste as a mere carpenter, quite unworthy to be allied to such a man as the épicier. Moreover, madame kept her husband's purse, and kept it shut against any hospitality to guests not chosen by herself.

"If you will not"—Jeanne spoke in a hard, desperate voice—"then bring him to us. I will dare everything. My father even will not turn a dying man out of doors."

"Diable!"—Ferdinand had been looking close at his burden—"we must be quick, monsieur. Lenord is bleeding from the side here."

He pointed to a large dark mark on the blue uniform. Instinctively Jeanne put her hand there, and drew it back blood-stained.

The hair-dresser forgot his wife and his scruples—forgot all but the impulsive French nature—which determined him to risk everything but his honour, and this he felt to be implicated in succouring a wounded soldier.

"Wounded! mon Dieu! Run, mamzelle!" he exclaimed, "send my man Alexis to help, and tell Nanine to be ready."

In the midst of his excitement it was a soothing reflection to Monsieur Le Petit that his wife was dining at her mother's in the company of Monsieur Dupont; there was no chance of her return before evening.

Jeanne hurried on into the Rue St. Jean. She had only to cross the road to Monsieur Le Petit's house; but at the corner her gown was pulled by some one, and she stopped.

"Let me go; I can't stay an instant." Jeanne looked up at her hinderer. It was Thérèse Devisme.

"What are you about, Jeanne? Do go quickly in-doors, and leave this soldier, whoever he is, to the men who are with him. You look wild, mon enfant. Victor would not be pleased to see you bare-headed in the open street."

"Let me pass!" Jeanne's eyes flashed at her future sister. "It is Baptiste, I tell you, and he is bleeding to death."

Mademoiselle Devisme stood in open-mouthed horror. She had always considered Jeanne wilful; but there was a flagrant daring in this proceeding which took her breath away.

Baptiste Lenord!—the very person Jeanne ought to avoid, now that she belonged to Victor, and, instead, she was actually disgracing

herself by running about the streets telling folks in a wild way that he was wounded.

Thérèse had been putting up prayers that morning at St. Etienne for her wounded countrymen; but her patriotism succumbed for the moment. "Wounded! What else can soldiers expect? Jeanne ought to be ashamed to make such a fuss about a wound!" Thérèse had not lost sight of Jeanne while she stood murmuring at the corner of the by-street. She saw her go into the hairdresser's shop and summon his assistant, and then a moment after, Nanine, Monsieur Le Petit's servant, came flying down the street.

"She has sent for Dr. Roussel herself. Jeanne is undoubtedly mad," said Mademoiselle Thérèse.

But a knot of idlers was gathering, and by the time the three men had borne Baptiste Lenord into the house, quite a busy little crowd filled the street between the houses of the épicier and that of Monsieur Le Petit.

Mademoiselle Devisme could not form one of such a group, and she went home, full of outraged propriety.

VII.

The doctor had come, and had looked very grave. The loss of blood had been frightful. It was evident that Lenord had travelled some distance in his wounded state, and there was little hope he could rally from the exhaustion.

"You will send for his mother?"

At first Jeanne had shrunk from the doctor's gaze; now she met it fully. There was such a quivering, hungering despair in those dark brown eyes, that Dr. Roussel winced as from the sight of a starving man.

"Why? He is unconscious; he may never know any one again. If Madame Lenord comes she will nurse him herself. Why should I yield up the care of him to any one?"

"Mon enfant, because this is not your place, and it is Madelaine's." He put his hand on Jeanne's, to quiet the interruption she tried to speak. "You think it is yours; but just now you are carried out of yourself; you cannot see things as they are. I owe it to your father and to Monsieur Devisme, for whom I have a profound respect"—he bowed—"to tell you you ought not to be here. Do not fear, Baptiste shall be well cared for."

Jeanne stood a minute, hard and defiant; but there was nothing irritating in the doctor's manner; his grave eyes looked full of pity for her. Her heart, too, was over-burdened; it was a relief to yield to its longing for sympathy. The slender fingers the doctor held closed suddenly on his, and he felt Jeanne's warm kisses on his hand.

"God bless you, monsieur! You are good; you have some pity; you will not drive me mad. If you knew how I have sinned against Baptiste—how, when I saw him there suddenly, like a spirit, in the

street, it seemed to me he had come back to St. Roque to show to me that I had murdered him by my fierce, hard temper! Oh, Monsieur Roussel, see into my heart, if you can! I know I am of little use; but think what it is to me to be able even to watch him, and wipe his lips on my knees! Why will you take this consolation from me?"

"Well, well"—the doctor stroked her head and thought a minute—"perhaps you may come from time to time and see how we go on. But his mother must be sent for; it is her right."

"And if she comes, do you know what she will do? She will send me away at once from Baptiste."

"No she will not"—Dr. Roussel smiled—"I am master here at present, my child, and if you are quiet and self-controlled, you may be of use; but remember, you have no *right* here."

He was surprised at Jeanne's answer. It came in a sad, subdued voice—

"No, it is true; I have no right here! I forfeited that by my own wickedness!"

"Hum! I wonder how long this new mood will last," thought the doctor.

Monsieur Le Petit undertook to fetch Madelaine himself; he was glad of a pretext for being absent when his wife and Monsieur Dupont should return.

Jeanne sat beside her charge, gazing fondly at the loved, changed face, so still and death-like, with rigid lines of pain about the eyes and mouth. By-and-by Nanine came in on tip-toe to tell her she was wanted. Jeanne shook her head and pointed to the bed. Some one put Nanine aside and came gently into the room. It was Dr. Roussel.

"Go down," he said to Jeanne; "I will stay till you come back."

Jeanne wondered at her own obedience; but she went.

Victor had come to see her; he was standing at the foot of the stairs. He looked very pale, but he did not speak; he opened the door of Madame Le Petit's salon and pointed to Jeanne to go in there. Victor had a patient, much-enduring temper; but dissatisfaction with Jeanne had been growing, her avoidance had stung him deeply, and his sister's news had just been the spark wanting to kindle a strong tempest of indignation and wounded love. And yet when he looked at Jeanne, his love was as strong as ever—stronger, for jealousy gave keenness to his determination that she should be his wife. He did not even say bon jour, or attempt to take her hand.

"You know why I have come!" he said.

"No, not quite." She looked honestly at him, and he saw the sorrow in her eyes. It only increased his jealousy.

"I have come to take you to your home, Jeanne. This house is not a fit place for you to stay in; it is compromising. Why, even Madame Le Petit is not at home."

"I cannot go away, Victor. You are angry—you have the right; and I must bear your anger."

He was angry now, he flushed a deep red.

"You must come from here, I say. The man you are nursing has the doctor, and will soon have his mother. It is wholly unnecessary that you should stay here. Jeanne, listen; have some consideration for me: you have promised to be my wife, and it is not your place to be running about after wounded soldiers and nursing them." His pride kept back any show of jealousy; but Jeanne's frank nature burst forth—

"I am sorry, Victor; but it is not because he is a wounded soldier that I say I must stay here. It is because he is Baptiste. I can't talk to you now, I must go to him. I do not blame you—I do not expect you to forgive me; but I must stay with Baptiste."

Victor stood in front of her so that she could not pass; he looked very angry, but Jeanne felt dead to fear.

"You shall not stay here, I tell you. I put myself aside. Even if you were nothing to me, a young girl like you cannot remain with a wounded soldier unless she is a nurse or a sœur. You are excited, or you would know it too. Be reasonable. Come home now." He took her hand, Jeanne drew it away.

"I will not," she said firmly.

For a moment Victor felt that he must snatch her up in his arms and save her from her own wilfulness by carrying her across the street; but something in her manner restrained him—she seemed sorrowful, not angry. Was she sorry for him or only for Baptiste?

"Ah, Jeanne!" he said, "have you, then, no thought for me? Me, your promised husband, you avoid and neglect, to devote yourself to a man who himself gave you up." Jeanne trembled and grew pale; but Victor went on in an agitated voice—"It has come to this between us, that I must ask you if you think a man who really loves, who has the feelings and spirit of a man, can stand by tamely and see his promised wife bestowing herself utterly on some one else, and neglecting him meanwhile? If no other feeling will weigh with you, Jeanne, humanity—sympathy for the torment you make me suffer—should restrain you." He waited for her answer.

"I am very sorry, Victor; but please let me go!"

"You have not listened," he said angrily. "I see that I am as indifferent to you as one of the stones in the street. Oh, Jeanne! why did you accept my love? why did you promise to become my wife? You have never loved me; you have only mocked me by hopes you never meant to fulfil. I loved you long ago, but not as I love you now. If you had told me you belonged to some one else I would have tried to cure myself; now it is hopeless. You must marry me, Jeanne, or you destroy me."

The pain had grown deeper in the girl's face. At first it had seemed cruel and hard of Victor to keep her from Baptiste; but Jeanne was not wholly selfish. Though she had so long been the

slave of her own will, Victor's reiteration was rousing her from the one absorbing thought; it seemed to her that she had wronged him as much as she had wronged Baptiste. He was surprised when she took his hand and held it quietly:

"You should not love me, Victor. I am not worth your love." The tears came rushing to her eyes. "You must not—you cannot love a girl who has acted as I have acted towards you. You will not forgive me, I cannot expect you should; but I will tell you the truth at last, which I ought to have told sooner. Do you remember that evening I met you, and you asked me if I wished you to pay us a visit? I know not how I looked, but my heart was on fire. I had been cruelly misunderstood. I had humbled myself—ah, Victor! you don't know what it costs a girl like me to humble herself!—and I had been repulsed! I was bruised —heartsore! You offered me consolation, tenderness, soothing, and my poor torn soul wanted these things; and I was greedy enough, selfish enough, to rob you of your gifts, knowing that I could make no return!"

The flush came back to Victor's face, and the softening which Jeanne's words had brought there faded away.

"Do you mean to say," he said sternly, "that you never meant to marry me when you promised to be my wife?"

"Even that would have been less sinful." Jeanne's voice was broken by sobs. "Do not spare me, Victor, I deserve the worst you can say or think! Yes, I meant to marry you; but I knew I could never love you! I never really left off loving Baptiste! I laid all the blame on Madelaine Lenord; and sometimes lately, when I have pictured myself as your wife, seeing Baptiste return to claim my love, I have felt that I must have forgotten all honour and duty, and have gone to him if he would have taken me." Victor drew back a step. "No;" she went on eagerly, "I wrong myself, though that is difficult. I do not think God would have let me fall so low; but the feeling has told me how fierce the fight would have been, and that I should have deserved to have been left to my sin if I had tempted it! Oh, Victor! don't look so hard, so stern—I deserve it, but I can't bear it! Won't you forgive me?"

In that moment, Victor's face was to Jeanne like a sentence of judgment. How often she had turned away in weary shrinking from the love she saw there, and now, that she read in his stern expression the alienation she had longed for, it seemed as if she must win him back at least to friendship.

"No, I cannot forgive," he said harshly. "I must still love you, I cannot help it; and if you would leave Lenord and come to me now this minute, I'm fool enough, infatuated enough, to take you, Jeanne; but that is the only price of my forgiveness, and you are not in earnest when you ask for it. You are——" he stopped and looked at her fixedly. "Go away; I don't want to be hard on you, but you have made me hard yourself."

"God bless you, Victor! Some day you will believe that I have punished myself most of all."

He gave no answering sign, and she went away slowly, with none of the gladness of release she had looked for.

VIII.

Madelaine came and took her post beside her son; but Dr. Roussel spoke to her earnestly before she saw Jeanne, and the stern old woman tolerated the girl's presence, though she seemed unconscious of it.

Days passed by, and Baptiste still lay senseless. Monsieur Le Petit went about in a depressed and crestfallen state. Marie, the milk-woman, asserted that the hairdresser's ears had been boxed by his irascible wife on her return from her mother's. According to the same popular authority, Monsieur Dupont had been across to see Jeanne, and there had been a long and warm dispute between the grocer and his daughter; but Jeanne persisted in her attendance beside Baptiste. Folks talked and wondered, and did not know what to think. Mademoiselle Thérèse was questioned. She had been communicative enough on the day of the wounded man's arrival, but now she became suddenly dumb. She even told one of her inquisitive visitors that Monsieur Victor would resent scandalous talk of Jeanne Dupont, or any inquiry into the relations between the grocer's daughter and himself. So the gossips were forced to wait till the death or recovery of Baptiste Lenord should show how matters were really going to turn out.

The two women seemed to be vying with each other in self-devotion. Hitherto they had watched unwearily night and day, but on the third evening Madelaine's eyes grew heavy. She moved restlessly in her chair, but the drowsiness took stronger hold upon her; her head drooped, sank gradually, gradually, till the neck bent under its weight, and she nearly fell forward on the floor.

There had been little speech between the watchers; a few necessary questions and answers—that was all. Madelaine's steady avoidance of Jeanne had been maintained.

As she fell, Jeanne started forward and caught her; the old woman roused and shook herself free. But the girl's heart went out to her; she yearned to be at peace with Baptiste's mother.

"Sleep a little, ma mère—it will do you good. You can trust me to watch. Is it not so?"

Madelaine frowned, and then common sense got the better of her.

"I must sleep," she said, half sulkily, "or I may be found unwakeful when I am most needed."

She threw her apron over her face, leaned back, and was asleep almost at once.

Jeanne went up to the bed. Dr. Roussel had spoken more hopefully. He had said consciousness might return; and already, more than once, Jeanne had fancied she saw a quivering movement in the

sufferer's eyelashes. If she might only be alone with him at his first awakening! And the next minute she shrank from it. Baptiste had perhaps heard of her promise to Victor Devisme—he might turn from her in anger; and then she looked at the pale suffering face, and it seemed as if no such earthly feeling could ever again visit Baptiste Lenord. Might not his spirit even now be trying its wings for flight away for ever?

Jeanne knelt beside the bed, and gave way to an agony of tears. She had had to bear so much, to hide her grief away, and be so entirely calm and self-contained under Madelaine's eyes, her heart felt nearly bursting with pent-up sorrow. She did not know how long she had knelt there, when a touch roused her. She started up. She scarcely knew what she expected, but she saw that Madelaine had awakened and was standing over her. Jeanne followed the old woman's eyes to the bed. Baptiste was awake and conscious.

She had wished for Madelaine's absence—she had thought her own joy would be beyond all power of control; but, like many another impulsive woman, Jeanne found she could not forecast feelings. Instinctively she hid her eyes from Baptiste's sweet, loving look, and shrank behind Madelaine. The tall old woman bent over the bed, and whispers passed between the mother and son. Baptiste looked lovingly at his mother, and pressed her hand, but his eyes strayed away. Madelaine gave a little sigh. The sternness had left her when she turned to look at Jeanne. Jeanne had departed.

"I will bring her to thee, my boy."

Madelaine had not far to go. Jeanne stood in the dark passage outside, her head pressed against the wooden wall.

"Come, my child—he asks for thee;" and Madelaine put her hand on the girl's shoulder.

It seemed to Jeanne that she was in a dream. She, who had so sorely wronged both mother and son, to be thus claimed by them!

"Ma mère!" she held up her face for Madelaine's kisses, and she felt tears come with them.

"Thou wilt remember his weakness, my child."

Madelaine had got to the stairs, but she turned back with this caution. Jeanne nodded, and went swiftly to the bed-room. Madelaine sighed again as she went down-stairs.

"But I am a thankless old good-for-nothing. Have I then forgotten that parents are made for children, not children for parents? The birds make nests for their eggs and for the little ones who break the eggshells, but when the young birds are strong on the wing the home-life is ended. No, a child is given us to rear and to love, but we must be content to rear him for others, and to give him all our heart when he can only give half of his. But my child is not for any of us. Poor Jeanne! she is not as ready to yield him as I am. She has not learned yet the Love that is waiting for Baptiste; she does not know—how can she, poor child?—that it is more than she can give him."

Jeanne was kneeling again beside the bed. Baptiste stretched his hand out feebly—oh, how feebly!—and she hid her eyes on it and devoured it with silent kisses.

"My beloved," he said faintly, "look at me."

Jeanne raised her head timidly, and her eyes stole to his face—they rested there conscience-struck, yet brimming over with her love. The answering love she met drew her onwards—drew her arms tenderly round him till his head rested on her bosom. Baptiste gave a deep sigh of relief. Jeanne's tears fell like rain; some drops touched his forehead.

"Why dost thou cry, my Jeanne? I am happier than I ever thought to be again. I am in thy arms—I can feel thy heart beat—thou art mine still—my own, is it not so?"

"Yes," she sobbed; "but it is only because thou forgivest me. Thou art so merciful; but thy forgiveness cannot wipe out my sin. Oh, my Baptiste! I can never be really forgiven."

"Hush!" His voice was faint, and he paused. "See, Jeanne, I shall not talk much to thee—I have no power. It may be in the blood dropping, dropping always from my heart, in that long journey home, some evil thoughts, some evil passions, have dropped too. The good God ordered all this, my well-beloved. We both sinned against Him by our angry words. I was also wicked. We made our own sorrow, my child. Do not cry so much; the end would have come—the end was made long ago. Kiss me, my wife—my Jeanne. I can never have thee now, but thou art mine always."

She kissed him fervently, reverently, and then they kept still. He said sometimes, "My Jeanne," "She is mine always;" sometimes "God be thanked;" and then her tears came welling forth silently.

Madelaine crept in after a while, but there was no more speaking for Baptiste; he had fought his last fight, he had spent his last strength in that weary journey home; but his eyes spoke tenderly.

It seemed to the sorrowing, penitent heart of Jeanne that those loving looks were more than she could bear; but it was Jeanne that the dying eyes sought—her hand that the feeble fingers clung to till the end.

"It was hard for me, but it was right and just, monsieur,"—Madelaine was relating the scene to the docteur Roussel, tears streaming over her hard-featured, tender face. "Monsieur le Curé made me see it when he came away from my boy. Baptiste had nothing to forgive me, but he had to heal that broken heart before he went away, and his time was short. Ah, Monsieur Roussel! have you heard that Jeanne has left her home? she is going to be a nurse for the rest of her sorrowful life. She says the sick and wounded will want all the time and strength she has. Monsieur"—Madelaine whispered the rest,—"the poor child can never forget her sin against Baptiste."

KATHARINE S. MACQUOID.

CATHAY.

WITH NOTICES OF TRAVELLERS TO THAT COUNTRY.

The popular impression is so strong that China was a new discovery in the sixteenth century, that if we were Irish we should be disposed to call this paper, "*Visits to China before it was discovered.*" The idea is, however, equally well conveyed without a bull, if we term it "*Notices of Cathay.*" For to those who have paid any attention to the subject, the mere use of that name will define the period with which we mean to deal, viz., the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries.

Our notices of China as known to the West might indeed go many centuries further back, though not under the name that we have prefixed. We might go back to the *Sinim* of the Prophet Isaiah if we were bold enough; we might with firmer assurance go back to the Seres and Sinae of classic poets and geographers, which were but two names applied to the same great people as dimly seen from landward on the north, and from seaward on the south; and to the *Tzinista* of the Alexandrine monk and merchant, Cosmos, in the sixth century, which was but a Grecizing of the Persian appellation *Chinistán.* But to begin so far back would lead to prolixity; we confine ourselves, then, to *Cathay.*

This name, Khitai, though its European use be limited properly to the centuries we have specified, is to this day that by which China is known to nearly all the nations which are accustomed to view it from a landward point of view, including the Russians, the Persians, and the nations of Turkestan. The name was originally borrowed from that of a people who were not, properly speaking, Chinese at all. The *Khitans* were a people of Manchu lineage (kindred therefore to the race of the present Imperial Dynasty), who in the tenth century overran all the northern provinces of China, and established a considerable empire, embracing those provinces and the adjoining regions of Tartary. This empire subsisted for two centuries. The same curious process took place which seems always to have followed the intrusion of Tartar conquerors into China, and strongly resembling that which followed the establishment of the Roman emperors in Byzantium. The intruders themselves adopted Chinese manners, ceremonies, and literature, and gradually therewith degenerated and lost all warlike energy. It must have been during the period (ending with the overthrow of the dynasty in 1123) when this northern

monarchy was the face which the Celestial Empire turned to Inner Asia, that the name of *Khitan*, *Khitat*, or *Khitai* became indissolubly associated with China.

A century later came the climax of the power of Chinghiz, the Mongol conqueror of the eastern world. One result of his conquests, and those of his immediate successors, by the depression into which they threw, for a time, Mahomedan arrogance, and, in fact, all the political partitions of Asia, was to open the breadth of that great continent to the travellers, traders, and missionaries of the west. "It is worthy of the grateful remembrance of all Christian people," says one of the ecclesiastical travellers of the next age, "that just when God let loose in the eastern parts of the world those Tartars to slay and to be slain, He sent forth also into the western parts of the world his faithful and blessed servants, Dominic and Francis, to enlighten, instruct, and build up in the faith." And, indeed, whatever we may think on the whole of the world's debt to Dominic (as indirectly, if not directly, the Father of the Inquisition), it is to the brethren of the two orders, but chiefly to the Franciscans, that we owe a large part of the notices of Eastern Asia that those ages have bequeathed.

Thus, among the many wanderers dumb to posterity, who found their way to the far court of Karakorum, on the northern verge of the Mongolian Desert, luckily for us there went, also, in 1245, John of Plano Carpini, a native of Umbria, and, a few years later, the Fleming William of Ruysbroek, or De Rubruquis, both of them Franciscan monks of superior intelligence, whose narratives have been preserved.

First by these two, after centuries of oblivion, Europe was told of a great and civilised people, dwelling in the extreme east upon the shores of the ocean; and to the land of this people they gave a name now first heard in the west, that of CATHAY.

The elder and earlier monk, after several incidental references to the *Kitai*, returns to speak of them more particularly thus:—

> "The Cathayans are a Pagan people, who have a written character of their own. They have also, it is reported, a New and an Old Testament; they have besides a Book of the Lives of the Fathers, and they have religious recluses, and buildings used very much like churches, in which they say their prayers at appointed seasons of their own. They worship the one God, and reverence the one Lord Jesus Christ, and believe in Eternal Life, but are entirely without baptism. They honour and reverence our Scriptures, are affectionately disposed towards Christians, and do many almsdeeds; indeed they seem to be kindly and civilised folk enow. They have no beard; and in their features are very much like the Mongols, but not so broad in the face. They have a peculiar language. Better craftsmen in all the arts practised by mankind are not to be found on the face of the earth. Their country also is very rich in corn, in wine, gold, silver, and in silk, and in all other things that tend to human maintenance."

These curious statements about the *quasi*-Christianity of the

Chinese will be found repeated in Oriental rumour again and again, down to the seventeenth century, and are doubtless connected with those singular parodies of the Roman worship and religious orders which are to be found in the Buddhism of Tibet and China, and which led some of the later, as well as the earlier, missionaries of the Roman Church to declare that the evil one had devised these parodies in order to throw ridicule on the Church and obstruct its progress. Indeed, in our day, poor Père Huc, in spite of his adoption of the latter theory, painted those analogies so vividly, that he is said to have found, to his dismay, his charming book on Tibet placed in the *Index Prohibitus* of Rome!

Rubruquis (1253) gives somewhat more of detail. He shows his acumen by identifying the Cathayans with the ancient *Seres;* and he is not only the first, but, as far as we know, the only mediæval traveller who had the sagacity to discern (though, of course, imperfectly) the great characteristic of Chinese written language. The following are his chief remarks on the Cathayans:—

"Beyond this is *Great Cathay*, the people of which I believe to have been those anciently called Seres. From them still come the best silk stuff, which the people in that quarter still term *seric*, and the nation has the name of Seres from a certain city of theirs. I was well assured that in that country there is a town which has walls of silver and battlements of gold"—a Chinese legend of the ancient capital Singanfu, and which may remind us of Ptolemy's remark that it was *not true* that the metropolis of the Sinae had walls of brass. The friar goes on: "The people are little fellows who talk much through the nose; and, like most folk in the far east, they have eyes with a very narrow aperture. They are the very best of artists in every kind of craft; and their physicians have an excellent knowledge of the virtues of herbs, and of diagnosis by the pulse" (on which last matter you will find prolix pages on pages in Duhalde) . . . . "Their current money consists of pieces of cotton paper, of a palm in length and breadth, on which are printed"—remark that expression—"certain lines in imitation of the seal of the Great Khan Mangu. They do their writing with a hair-pencil, such as painters paint withal, and in what they write a single character embraces several letters, so as to form a word in itself."

When Rubruquis in this passage (with the *Serica Vestis* of the ancients in mind) points out that the people at Karakorum still called silk stuffs by the name of *seric*, he anticipates the learned etymologies of Klaproth, and refers, doubtless, as the latter does, to the *sirkek* of the Mongols, their word for silk.

In another passage Rubruquis tells us that he had heard for a fact that beyond Cathay there was a certain place with this peculiarity, that whoever entered it *never grew any older;* but he really could not believe this.

Rubruquis had been sent on this mission by St. Lewis of France, part of his commission being to ascertain the truth of the rumours spread that Sartac, one of the great Mongol princes, was a Christian. This, according to the traveller, proved entirely unfounded. Indeed he was admonished by one of that Prince's officers,—"Mind what you are about, saying that our master is a Christian; he is no such thing, but a *Mongol.*" Just so we have heard of an unlucky Southron traveller in days gone by, benighted in a village north of the Scotch border, and exclaiming in despair—"Was there then no good Christian who would take him in?" "Na, na," was all the reply, "we're all Jardines and Johnstones here!"

Other brief notices of Cathay occur in the narrative of the Journey of Hayton, king of the small Cilician territory, which bore the name of Little Armenia, who in 1254-55 visited by invitation the court of Mangu Khan at Karakorum. Among other things King Hayton heard that beyond Cathay there was a country where the women were possessed of reason *just like men*, whilst the male sex were represented by great shaggy dogs, devoid of reason; a story which had been told also to Plano Carpini, and which Klaproth has found in Chinese books of the period. It is an Arab legend also, in somewhat different form, and probably has its foundation in the exceeding disproportion in personal comeliness between the two sexes, which is found in many peoples of Mongolian race.

Our scheme and space admit only of an allusion to that illustrious Venetian family, whose travels occupy a large portion of the interval between the journey of Rubruquis and the end of the thirteenth century, and who were in fact the first Europeans known actually to have reached Cathay. All other travellers to Cathay are stars of inferior magnitude beside the orb of Marco Polo. There was a time when he was counted among the romancers; but that is long past, and his veracity and justness of observation still shine brighter under every recovery of lost and forgotten knowledge. Fifty years ago Marsden did much in a splendid edition to elucidate the traveller's narrative; but it is no exaggeration to say that the material for the illustration of the story has been more than doubled since that day, scarcely so much from the expansion of modern travel as from the stores of Chinese, Mongol, and Persian history which have been rendered accessible to European readers, or brought directly to bear upon the elucidation of the traveller by the great scholars of France and Germany. Within the last few years Paris has issued a beautiful edition of the book by M. Panthier, which brings forward a vast mass of new matter from the editor's own Chinese studies. It is indeed to be regretted in this work that there is a want of generosity in the recognition of the labours of the editor's predecessors, and towards some of them an acrimony which makes outsiders marvel and exclaim, "Tantæne animis cœlestibus iræ?" Wherefore should the

language of the celestial empire have so bad an effect on the temper of its students?

Just as the three noble Venetians were reaching their native city (*i.e.*, in 1295), the forerunner of a new band of travellers was entering China from the south. This was John of Monte Corvino, a Franciscan monk, who, already nearly fifty years of age, was plunging alone into that great sea of paganism, and of what he deemed little better, Nestorianism (for the Nestorian Christians at this time had flourishing communities in many parts of China), to preach the Gospel according to his understanding of it. After years of uphill work and solitary labour, as better days began to dawn, others joined him; the Popes woke up to what was going on; he was created Archbishop in Cambalec (or Peking) with patriarchal authority, and was spasmodically reinforced with batches of suffragan bishops and friars of his order. The Roman Church spread; churches or Franciscan convents were established at Cambalec, at Kinsai (or Hangcheufu), then by general consent of Christian and Mahomedan the vastest city in the world, at Zayton (or Chincheu), at Yangcheu near the Great Kiang, and elsewhere; and the missions flourished under the immediate patronage of the Great Khan himself. Friar John, in the early and solitary days of his mission, followed a system which has sometimes been adopted by Protestant missions during famines in India. In his letter he says:—

> "I have bought gradually one hundred and fifty boys, the children of pagan parents, who had never learned any religion. These I have baptized, and taught Greek and Latin after our manner. Also, I have written out Psalters for them, with thirty Hymnaries and two Breviaries. By help of these, eleven of the boys already know our service, and form a choir, and take their weekly turn of duty, whether I am there or not. Many of the boys are also employed in writing out Psalters and other things suitable. . . . . . When we are chaunting, his Majesty the Cham can hear our voices in his chamber; and this wonderful fact is spread far and wide among the heathen. . . . . . And I have a place in the Cham's Court, and a regular entrance and seat assigned me as legate of our Lord the Pope, and the Cham honours me above all other prelates, whatever be their titles."

Among the friars who visited China during the interval between the beginning of the fourteenth century and the year 1328, when Archbishop John, full of years and honour, was followed to his tomb by a mourning multitude of Pagans as well as Christians, several have left letters or more extended accounts of their experience in Cathay. Among these was Friar Odoric of Pordenone in Friuli, to whose work we shall recur by-and-by.

The Exchange had its envoys to China at this period as well as the Church. The record is a very fragmentary one; but many circumstances and incidental notices show how frequently both India and China were reached by European traders during the first half of the fourteenth century—a state of things very difficult to realise when

we see how all the more easterly of those regions, when re-opened only two centuries later, seemed almost as absolutely new discoveries as the empire which about the same time Cortez and Pizarro were annexing in the west.

As examples of the frequency of mercantile expeditions to India, we may quote the allusion of the Venetian Marino Sanuto, writing about 1306, to the many merchants who had already gone to that country to make their purchases and come back safely. About 1322 Friar Jordanus, a Dominican, when in sore trouble at Tana (near Bombay), falls in with a young Genoese, who gives him aid; and the same Jordanus, writing at a later date from Gogo, in Guzerat, refers to information apparently received from Latin merchants on that coast. John Marignolli, when in Malabar about 1348, has for interpreter a youth who had been rescued from pirates in the Indian Sea by a merchant of Genoa. Mandeville speaks of the Italian merchants who frequented Hormuz. Again, as regards China and the remoter regions of Asia, John of Monte Corvino was accompanied all the way from Persia to Peking (1292-95) by Master Peter of Luculongo, "a faithful Christian man and a great merchant." There was then perhaps an intermission of some years; for Friar John, writing in 1305, says that twelve years had passed since he had heard any European news, except some in the shape of awful blasphemies about the Pope, which had been spread by a certain chirurgeon of Lombardy (probably a *Paterino*, or *quasi*-Protestant heretic) some two years before. A little later in the century, however, Odoric refers for confirmation of the wonders he had to tell of Kansai (Hangcheufu) to the many persons he had met at Venice since his return, who had themselves been witnesses of the truth of his tales. A letter written in 1326 by Andrew Bishop, of Zayton (or Chincheu), quotes on a question of exchanges the opinion of the Genoese merchants at that great seaport. Some twenty years later John Marignolli found in the same city a *fondaco*, or factory and warehouse for the use of the Christian merchants; and about 1339 we find William of Modena, a merchant, dying with certain Franciscans, as a martyr to the faith, at Almalig, in the depths of Tartary.

But the most distinct and notable evidence of the importance and frequency of this eastern trade is to be found in the work of Francis Balducci Pegolotti, a factor in the service of the great Florentine house of the Bardi (the house which gave a husband to Dante's Beatrice, and a heroine to George Eliot, in *Romola*), for whom he had acted not only in England and Flanders, but in Cyprus and the East. This book, which was written about 1340, under the name of *Divisamenti di Paesi*, or "Descriptions of Countries," is a regular handbook of commerce, and the first two chapters of it are devoted to useful information for the merchant going to Cathay. The route lay from Tana or Azov to Sarai, then a great city on the Wolga above Astracan, and thence by Astracan, Saraichik on the River Yaic or Ural, Organj near

Khiva, Otrar near the Jaxartes, and Almalig near the River Ili, to Kancheu in North-Western China, and so forward to the Great Canal which led to the great marts of Peking and Hungcheu. Particulars are given as to the investments and exchanges proper to the journey, and especially as to the paper money which formed the only currency of China; how the traveller was to dress and otherwise provide himself for the journey; what carriage he would require, and what his expenses ought to be. The road travelled from Tana to Cathay, the author says, was perfectly safe, whether by day or night, according to the report of the merchants who had used it. And the ventures were evidently no inconsiderable matters; for the example taken by the author to illustrate the question of exchanges is that of a merchant with a dragoman and two men-servants, and goods to the value of 25,000 gold florins, or about £12,000 in intrinsic value.

This intercourse, both religious and commercial, probably continued till the fall of the Mongol dynasty in China (1368). The latest detailed notice of it which we possess is the account of the journey of John Marignolli, a Florentine friar, and afterwards Bishop of Bisignano, in Calabria, who was sent with some others in 1338 by Pope Benedict XII. on an embassy to the Court of Peking, in return for one which had come from the Emperor Togatimur, called by the Chinese Shunti, to the Papal Court at Avignon. The notices of this journey have been preserved for us in a manner sufficiently whimsical. Marignolli, after his return in 1353, seems to have acquired the favour of the Emperor Charles IV., who was King of Bohemia. He made the traveller one of his chaplains, and carried him to Prague. During this visit the new chaplain was desired by his imperial patron to undertake the task of recasting the Annals of Bohemia. Charles would have shown a great deal more sense if he had directed the Churchman to put on paper the detailed narrative of his eastern experiences. However, let us be thankful for what we have. The essential part of the task was utterly repugnant to the Tuscan ecclesiastic. He drew back, as he says, from the thorny thickets and tangled brakes of the Bohemian chronicles, "from the labyrinthine jungle of strange names, the very utterance of which was an impossibility to his Florentine tongue." And so he consoled himself under the disagreeable task by interpolating his chronicle, *à propos de bottes*, with the recollections of his Asiatic travels, or with the notions they had given him of Asiatic geography. It might perhaps have been hard to drag these into a mere chronicle of Bohemia; but in those days every legitimate chronicle began from Adam at the very latest, and it would have been strange if this did not afford latitude for the introduction of any of Adam's posterity. And thus it is that we find these curious reminiscences imbedded in a totally unreadable chronicle of Bohemia, like unexpected fossils in a bank of mud. As these notices are little known, we propose to come back upon them more fully, and also

upon the visit to China of the Moorish traveller Ibn Batuta, which took place about the time that Marignolli quitted Peking.

Soon after this time missions and merchants alike disappear from the field, as the Mongol dynasty totters and comes down. We hear indeed, once and again, of friars and bishops despatched from Avignon; but they go forth into the darkness, and are traced no more. For the new rulers of China revert to the old indigenous policy, and hold foreigners aloof, whilst Islam has recovered and extended its grasp over Central Asia; and the Nestorian Christianity, which once prevailed so widely there, is rapidly vanishing, leaving its traces only in some strange semblances of Church ritual which are found woven into the worship of the Tibetan Lamas, like the cabin-gildings and mirrors of a wrecked vessel treasured among the fetishes of a Polynesian chief. A dark mist descends upon the further East, covering Mangi and Cathay, with those cities of theirs of which the old travellers told such wonders—Cambalec and Kansai and Zayton and Chinkalan. And when the veil rises before the Portuguese and Spanish explorers nearly two centuries later, those names are heard no more. In their stead we have China, with Peking and Hangcheu, Chincheu and Canton. Not only are the old names forgotten, but the fact that the places had been known before is utterly forgotten also. Gradually Jesuit missionaries go forth anew from Rome; new converts are made, and new vicariats constituted. But of the old converts no trace has survived; they and the Nestorians with whom they battled have alike been swallowed up again in the ocean of Paganism. The earlier impression of Ricci and his Jesuit comrades was that no Christianity had ever existed in China, though somewhat later the belief was modified; and even a few relics of Christian art were found, culminating in the discovery of the elaborate Christian monument of Singanfu, which, however, belongs to a much older date than we deal with in this paper. By-and-by, too, Marco Polo came to the surface, and one and another began to suspect that China and Cathay were one.

But we have been going too fast over the ground, and must return to that dark interval of which we have spoken, between the fall of the Mongol dynasty in China, and the first appearance of the Portuguese in the Bocca Tigris. The *name* of Cathay was not forgotten; the poets and romancers kept it in mind, and it figured in maps of the world. Nor was this all. Some flickering gleams of light came once and again from behind the veil which hung over the East of Asia. Such are the cursory notices of Cathay which reached the Castilian Gonzalez de Clavijo, on his embassy to the Court of Timur in 1404, and Hans Schiltberger, of Munich, who served in the army of the same conqueror. A more substantial account is found in the narrative of the wanderings of Nicolo Conti, of Venice, taken down from his lips by Poggio Bracciolini in 1440 or 1442. It is not distinctly stated in this narrative that Conti had been in Cathay, but there is internal

evidence of the fact. The information that he brought home was eagerly caught at by the map-makers of the age, and much of it is embodied in that gorgeous work, the map of Fra Mauro, now in the ducal palace at Venice.

A century passed after the discovery of the Cape route before the identity of Cathay and China was fully established, and in that time we find several narratives that treat of the journey to Cathay without any recognition of that identity. Such is that which Ramusio gives us, as received from an intelligent Persian called Hajji Mahomed, who had come to Venice with rhubarb for sale, remarkable as containing the first distinct mention of *tea* (so far as we know), published in Europe; and another narrative of a similar character, which Busbeck, when ambassador from Charles V. to the Ottoman Court, picked up from a wandering dervish.

Late in the sixteenth century Jerome Xavier, nephew of the great Francis, and himself a Jesuit missionary at the court of Akbar, met in the great king's durbar in Lahore a Mahomedan merchant who had just arrived from Cathay. The picture which he drew of the country, and especially the account which he gave of the religion of the people, greatly excited Father Jerome, who saw in it an untouched and promising field for the labours of the Society. He strongly urged his superiors to send a party to reconnoitre this country, in which he fancied that the long-lost land of Prester John was at last to be revealed. The opinion of Ricci and his comrades, who had come to the conclusion that the Cathay of the old travellers was the very China in which they were labouring, was communicated to him; but Father Jerome was not to be convinced, and brought forward arguments on the other side sufficiently plausible to bend the authorities at Goa to his views. The expedition was resolved upon, and Benedict Goes, a lay coadjutor of the Society, and one of the noblest characters in the history of travels, was selected for the task. After a long and difficult journey in the character of an Armenian merchant, by way of Kabul, the high table-land of Pamir, Yarkand, Aksu, and Kamul, he reached Kancheu on the Chinese frontier in 1605. Here he was kept for eighteen months by the intolerable delays and obstacles to the admission of travellers into the empire. He had come to the conclusion that the Cathay he was sent to seek was no other than China, but his endeavours to communicate with his brethren at Peking were long unsuccessful. At last they succeeded: a native convert was sent to help him forward, and arrived at Kancheu only to find Benedict on his death-bed. "Seeking Cathay he found Heaven," as one of his Order has pronounced his epitaph. With him the curtain may finally drop upon Cathay. China alone could be recognised thenceforward by reasonable people, though for nearly a century later geographical works of some pretension continued to indicate Cathay as a distinct region, with Cambalu for its capital.

After this sketch of one phase of the communication between China and the Western world, we return to speak more particularly of some of the travellers who have been named.

First, then, of Friar Odoric. Born about 1280, of a Bohemian family settled in Friuli, he joined the Franciscans at an early age, and about 1316, impelled, it would seem, by a natural love of roaming, rather than by the missionary zeal afterwards ascribed to him, he obtained the permission of his superiors to set out for the East. We have not space to trace his overland journey to the Persian Gulf, but thence he embarked at Hormuz for Tana, on the Island of Salsette, a port which may be considered the mediæval representative of Bombay, and now a station on the Great Peninsular Railway, a few miles from the modern city. Here four brethren of his order had recently met with martyrdom at the hands of the Mussulman governor of the city, which seems to have been then dependent on Delhi. Several chapters are devoted to the marvellous and very curious history of this event; and Odoric made it his business to take up the bones of his murdered comrades, and to carry them with him on his further voyage. He went on by sea to Malabar, and thence to Ceylon and Mabar, as the southern part of the Coromandel coast was then called by the Mahomedan navigators, and to Mailapur, a town close to the modern Madras, and the name of which still adheres to a suburb of that city, famous from an early date as the alleged burial-place of St. Thomas the Apostle, and visited as such by the envoys whom our own King Alfred sent to India.

Hence Odoric sailed to Sumatra, a name which he, perhaps, first brought to Europe, though it then applied to only a principality in the great island which now bears the title. He tells strange stories of the cannibalism for which certain tribes of that island have continued down to our own day to be infamous. As Hakluyt's quaint old version of the traveller's story runs: "Man's Flesh, if it be fat, is eaten as ordinarily there as Beefe in our country. Marchants comming vnto this Region for traffique do vsually bring to them fat men, selling them vnto the Inhabitants as wee sel Hogs, who immediately kil and eate them!" Thence he went on to Java, apparently to Borneo, to Champa or Southern Cochin China, and so to Canton. From Canton he travelled to two of the great ports of Fokien—viz., Zayton (or Chincheu) and Fucheu. At the former he found two houses of his Order, and deposited with them the bones of his brethren, which he had carried thus far, and probably found somewhat inconvenient baggage for a land journey. From Fucheu he crossed the mountains to the great city of which we have already heard, Kinsai or Kansa (a corruption of the Chinese *king-szé*, or "capital"). Thence he visited Nanking, and crossed the mighty Kiang, which he describes, justly, as the greatest river in the (non-American) world, under the Mongol appellation of *Talai*, or "The Sea." At Yangcheufeu, where he

found three Nestorian churches, he embarked on the Great Canal, and proceeded by it to Cambalec (or Peking), where he abode for three years, attached, no doubt, to one of the churches founded there by Archbishop John, now in extreme old age. Turning homeward, at length, he went to Singanfu, in Shensi, for many years the capital of great Chinese dynasties—now the head-quarters of one of the great insurrections (in this case Mahomedan) which are tearing the Chinese empire to pieces. Thence he found his way to Tibet, and its capital, Lhassa, the seat, as he says, of "the Pope of the Idolaters." Here we lose all precise indication of his further route, only we gather from slight hints and probabilities that his further journey led him through Badcokhshan and the passes of the Hindu Kush to Kabul, and thence by the south of the Caspian to the shores of the Mediterranean. He reached his native soil in 1329-30.

The companion of Odoric, on part, at least, of these long wanderings, was Friar James, an Irishman, as appears from the record of a donation to him in the public books of Udine. It was in May, 1330, whilst lying ill in the convent of St. Anthony at Padua, that Odoric dictated his story, which was taken down in homely Latin by a brother monk, and in January of the following year he died at Udine, in his native province. We cannot here relate the curious circumstances that attended the funeral, which ended in the declaration of his miraculous sanctity. *Qui peregrinatur raro sanctificantur*, says an ecclesiastical adage, and there is certainly nothing in Odoric's story to suggest his possession of exceptional holiness. The movement seems to have been in the first place entirely a popular one, and to have taken his brother friars quite by surprise. *They*, probably, during his short residence among them since his return, had regarded him only as an eccentric, much addicted to drawing the long-bow about the Grand Cham and the Cannibal Islands! Be that as it may, Odoric was beatified by popular acclamation, the miracles performed by his remains were authenticated by a solemn commission,* and ever since he has been regarded at Udine as a sort of patron saint. He has never reached the higher honours of canonisation, but in the middle of the last century the cult rendered to him for centuries received the solemn sanction of the Pope. We have seen the record of the process which then took place at Rome, a highly curious ecclesiastical blue-book of a hundred and fifty folio pages. The body of the beatified friar still lies at Udine, and is exhibited quadrennially to the eyes of the faithful, or so much of it as has not

* Seventy such miracles are alleged to have been authenticated; and indeed so says the heading of the Notary's Report of the Commission; though (like the cotton reels of Manchester, which profess to contain two hundred yards of thread) as a matter of fact it enumerates only twenty-seven. The scribe at the end apologises—"I have written them down as well as I could . . . . . but not the whole of them, because there was no end to them, and I found it too difficult"—in fact, "what no fellow could do!"

been frittered away in reliques. These were in high esteem in the last century, and Father Venni, one of the biographers, assures us that in his day the *Polvere del Beato Odorico* was reckoned potent in fevers, like the James's powders of our youth. We have not seen the body of this eminently wandering Christian, but we have visited his tomb, and the cottage where he was born, near Pordenone.

Odoric has been scouted as a liar, and even the brethren who wrote his history as one of the saints of their Order, have been unable to hide their doubts. One says that much in the book will seem incredible unless the holy character of the narrator find belief or force it—*fidem extruat vel extorqueat*. Another is reduced to plead character—so saintly a man would never have told lies, much less have *sworn* to them as Odoric has done!

There is no doubt, however, that he was a genuine, though undiscriminating, traveller. We cannot enter into all the proofs of this, but we may select a few passages in illustration of the manner of the story, and to show the justification that it admits of. We must not forget the disadvantage under which the story labours in having been dictated, and that in illness, and to a friar of probably still less literature than himself.

This may help to explain some of his most staggering stories. For instance, the narrative alleges that Odoric saw in Champa a tortoise as big as the dome of St. Anthony's at Padua. Now, the smallest of St. Anthony's many domes is some forty feet in diameter. But consider that the traveller was lying ill in that convent when he dictated the story to Brother William of Solagna. He tells the latter, perhaps, that he saw an awfully big tortoise. "How big?" quoth Guglielmo, all agape. "Was it as big as the dome yonder?" "Well, yes," says the sick traveller, without turning his weary bones to look, "I daresay it might be!" And so down it goes in regular narration—"And I saw in that country a tortoise that was bigger in compass than the dome of St. Anthony's church in Padua."

Now for a few specimens of his narrative. In describing a great idol on the Coromandel coast, he speaks of the various penances performed by the pilgrims who came from great distances to say their prayers before it, just, he remarks, as Christian folk go on pilgrimage to St. Peter's, and then he proceeds:—

> "And some have quite a different way of proceeding. For these as they start from their homes take three steps, and at every fourth step they make a prostration at full length upon the ground. And then they take a censer and incense the whole length of that prostration. And thus they do continually, until they reach the idol, so that sometimes, when they go through this operation, it taketh a very great while before they do reach the idol."

Now, this mode of penitential pilgrimage is by no means extinct in India. Not very long since, the Indian newspapers contained a striking account of the performance of such penances at some shrine

in the Deccan. One man, it was stated, had come from his home, a distance of four hundred and fifty miles, in this way—measuring his length along the ground, not at every *fourth* step, but continuously, at the rate of about one mile a day!

"Hard by the church of this idol," continues Odoric, "there is a lake made by hand, into which the pilgrims who come thither cast gold or silver and precious stones, in honour of the idol, and towards the maintenance of the church, so that much treasure has been accumulated therein. And thus, when it is desired to do any work upon the church they make search in the lake and find all that has been cast into it."

This, you may say, looks very like a "traveller's tale." But it happens that we learn from an Arabic work, translated by Quatremère, that among the towns in the south of India conquered by Mahomed Tughlak of Delhi, a few years after the visit of Odoric to that region, there was one which possessed an idol-temple held in great repute all over that country, and which stood in the middle of a lake, into which the worshippers used to cast their offerings. After the capture of the city, the sultan caused the lake to be drained, and the treasure accumulated in its bed sufficed to load two hundred elephants and several thousand oxen!

When in China, on his way from Zayton to Kinsai (see above), Odoric gives the earliest known description of the well-known Chinese practice of fishing with tame cormorants. His account, which is substantially identical with that which you will find in Staunton, Fortune, and other modern travellers, runs as follows:—

"Passing hence . . . . . I came to a certain great river, and I tarried at a certain city which hath a bridge across the river. At the head of the bridge was a tavern, in which I was entertained. And mine host, wishing to do me a pleasure, said: 'If thou wouldst see good fishing, come with me!' So he led me upon the bridge, and I looked and saw certain water-fowl tied upon perches. And these he went and tied with a cord round the throat that they might not be able to swallow the fish which they caught. Next he proceeded to put three great baskets into a boat, one at each end, and the third in the middle, and then he let the water-fowl loose. Straightway they began to dive into the water, catching great numbers of fish, and ever as they caught them putting them of their own accord into the baskets, so that, before long, all three baskets were full. And mine host then took the cord off their necks, and let them dive again to catch fish for their own food. And when they had thus fed they returned to their perches, and were tied up as before. And some of those fish I had for dinner."

Ending another chapter on the magnificence of the Court of Pekin, he concludes: "But no one need wonder at his being able to maintain such an expenditure; for there is nothing spent as money in his whole empire, but certain pieces of paper which are there current as money; whilst an infinite amount of treasure comes into his hands." Here, as previously from Rubruquis, we have an allusion to that system of paper currency which prevailed nationally in China for many centuries, and which, though for four hundred years it has

ceased to be national (though there have been recent efforts to re-establish it), is still maintained on a very large scale by local banks in great cities, such as Pekin and Fucheu.

We shall extract only one other passage from Odoric, and that, perhaps, the most questionable and perplexing in the whole narrative. It is the chapter in which the friar, on his return from Tibet to the west, describes a certain valley in which he saw terrible things:—

"Another great and terrible thing I saw. For as I went through a certain valley, which lieth by the River of Delights, I saw therein many dead corpses lying. And I heard also therein sundry kinds of music, but chiefly nagarets (or kettledrums) which were marvellously sounded. And so great was the noise thereof that very great fear came upon me. Now this valley is seven or eight miles long, and if any unbeliever enter therein he quitteth it nevermore, but perishes incontinently. Yet I hesitated not to go in, that I might see, once for all, what the matter was. . . . . . And at one side of the valley, in the very rock, I beheld, as it were, the face of a man, very great and terrible, so very terrible, indeed, that for my exceeding great fear my spirit seemed to die in me. Wherefore I made the sign of the cross, and began continually to repeat *verbum caro factum* ('The Word was made flesh,' &c.), but I dared not at all come nigh that face, but kept at seven or eight paces from it. And so I came at length to the other end of the valley, and there I ascended a hill of sand, and looked around me. But nothing could I descry, only I still heard those nagarets to play, which played so marvellously."

The locality of this adventure is left obscure ; but we think it can be fixed to the vicinity of the passes of the Hindu Kush, north of Kabul.

The river, you will have observed, on the banks of which he received these alarming impressions, is called the River of Delights, or, as it is in the Latin, *Flumen Deliciarum*, a name inappropriate enough to the tale. But if this was, as we can hardly doubt, in Odoric's mouth, *Fiume di Piaceri* (which is the actual reading in Ramusio's old Italian version), we see strong reason to believe that the word intended was not *pleasures* or *delights*, but the actual name of the River Panjsher, which flows from the Hindu Kush, north of Kabul. Wood tells us that the country thereabouts is rife with legends of the supernatural. And as regards the many corpses which our friar saw, the passes of the Panjsher were those, as Sultan Baber tells us in his memoirs, by which the robbers of Kafiristan constantly made their forays, *slaying great numbers of people*. Long before Baber's time, and before Odoric's, the Arab geographer, Edrisi, informs us that the people of Panjsher were notorious for their violence and wickedness : nor have they mended their manners ; for Captain Wood observes, of the Panjsher valley, that "this fair scene is chiefly peopled by robbers, whose lawless lives and never-ending feuds render it an unfit abode for honest men."

The awful and gigantic face in the cliff was probably some great rock-sculpture resembling the colossal figures at Bamian, described by Alexander Burnes ; and though these figures themselves are at a con-

siderable distance from the Panjsher, it is possible that the traveller's excited memory may have compressed into too narrow a compass all the circumstances of the passage of those mountains which had so strongly impressed his imagination. We may add that in the diary of a modern adventurer in those regions—a document, we must admit, vaguer and wilder than anything written by mediæval friar—we find the following passage strikingly analogous to the description of Odoric, of whose work, we will answer for it, the writer knew nothing :—

> "*27th July.*—The basaltic cliffs assume fanciful shapes: supposed to be Kafirs petrified by Abraham. One very remarkable human face on the precipitous sides of a dark ravine of amygdaloid rock is called Baboo Boolan, about twenty-five feet in height, with monstrous red eyes and mouth and aquiline nose. They are objects of extreme dread to the natives." *

The account of the Hill of Sand, on which our traveller heard the sound of invisible kettledrums, at once points to the phenomena of the *Rug Rowán*, or Flowing Sand, forty miles north of Kabul, and at the foot of the valley of Panjsher. Burnes describes the sounds heard there as loud and hollow, *very like those of a large drum*. Wood says the sound was that of *a distant drum mellowed by softer music* (how like our friar's "sundry kinds of music, but chiefly kettle-drums!"); Sultan Baber speaks of the sound as that of drums and *nagarets*, again the very instruments specified by Odoric.†

Before quitting Odoric's Terrible Valley, we may remark that one would almost think John Bunyan had been reading the passage in old John Hackluyt, when he indited the account of Christian's transit through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, *e.g.* :—

> "This frightful sight was seen, and those dreadful noises were heard, by him for several days together; and coming to a place where he thought he heard a company of friends coming to meet him, he stopped, and began to muse what he had best do . . . . . but when they were come even almost at him, he cried out, with a most vehement voice, 'I will walk in the strength of the Lord God!' so they gave back, and came no further."

We now pass to another of our travellers, and one still less generally known, viz., John Marignolli, the papal legate of 1338, of whom we have already spoken briefly. This dignitary of the Church is not a sage; his garrulous reminiscences show an incontinent vanity, and an incoherent lapse from one subject to another, matched by nothing in literature except the conversation of Mrs. Nickleby. But he is a man of considerable reading, and his recollections of what he

* Journal kept by Mr. Gardner during his travels in Central Asia, in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, vol. xxii. p. 290.

† The same phenomenon has been observed in various parts of the world, and always in connection with the movement of sand disturbed upon a slope. One celebrated instance is "the Hill of the Bell," in the peninsula of Sinai; and another was discovered by the lamented Hugh Miller in the island of Eig.

saw often form very vivid and graphic pictures, whilst his veracity is unimpeachable.

As a first extract we shall give a sample of the incoherency of some of his recollections, though really it is impossible in translation not to modify and soften the effect of the original *Nicklebyism*. This is from a chapter headed, "Concerning the Clothing of our First Parents." (You must remember that the book is professedly a chronicle of Bohemia, to which such a subject of course legitimately belongs):—

"And the Lord made for Adam and his wife coats of skins and clothed them therewith. But if it be asked, Whence the skins?—the answer usually made is, either that these were expressly created (which savours not of wisdom!); or that an animal was slain for the purpose (and *this* is not satisfactory, seeing that 'tis believed animals were created first in pairs only, and there had been no time for the multiplication of the species). Now, then, *I* say (but pray don't think I mean to dogmatize), that for *pelliceas*, we should read *filiceas*, or for coats of *fur*, coats of *fibre*. For among the fronds of the cocoa-nut, of which I have spoken before, there grows a sort of fibrous web, forming an open network of coarse dry filaments, and to this day among the people of Ceylon and India it is customary to make of those fibres wet-weather blankets for those rustics whom they call *camalls*, whose business it is to carry burdens, and also to carry men and women upon their shoulders in palankins, such as are mentioned in Canticles, *Ferculum fecit sibi Salomon de lignis Libani*, whereby is meant a portable litter, such as I used to be carried in when I was at Zaiton and in India.* A cloak, such as I mean, of this *camall* cloth (not *camel* cloth), I wore till I got to Florence, where I left it in the sacristy of the Minor Friars. No doubt the raiment of John Baptist was of this kind. For as regards *camel's hair*, that is, next to silk, the softest stuff in the world, and never *could* have been meant. By the way—speaking of camels—I once found myself in company with an innumerable multitude of camels and their foals in that immense desert by which you go down from Babylon of the Confusion towards Egypt, by way of Damascus; and of Arabs also there was no end! Not that I am meaning to say there were any camels in Ceylon. No; but there were innumerable *elephants*. And these, though they be most ferocious monsters, scarcely ever do any harm to a foreigner. I even *rode* on an elephant once! It belonged to the Queen of Saba. That beast did really seem to have the use of reason—if it were not contrary to the faith to say such a thing!"

In an earlier passage, the legate thus describes his reception by the emperor at Cambalec:—

"But the great Kaam, when he beheld the great horses, and the Pope's presents, with his letter, and King Robert's† likewise, with their golden seals, and when he saw us also, rejoiced greatly, being delighted—yea, exceedingly delighted—with everything, and he treated us with the greatest honour. And when I entered the Kaam's presence, it was in full festival vestments, with a very fine cross carried before me, and candles and incense, whilst *Credo in Unum Deum* was chaunted in that glorious palace in which he dwells. And when the chaunt was ended, I bestowed a plenary benediction, which he received with all humility. And so we were dismissed to one of the imperial apartments, which

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* The word intended by the good bishop is the Arabic *Hhamal*, a porter; still the usual word for a palanquin-bearer in Western India.

† Of Naples.

had been most elegantly fitted up for us; and two princes were appointed to attend to all our wants. And this they did in the most liberal manner, not merely as regards meat and drink, but even down to such things as paper for lanterns; whilst all necessary servants were also detached from the court to wait upon us."

You will observe that among the presents sent to the emperor in the legate's charge were certain *Destriers* or "great horses." Now it is pleasing to find that though our legate himself has no place in the Chinese annals, these great horses *have*. Under our year, 1342, that of Marignolli's arrival at Peking, it is recorded that there were presented to the emperor certain horses of the kingdom of *Fulang* (*Farang* or Europe) of a breed till then unknown in China. One of these horses was *eleven feet and a half* in length, and *six feet eight inches* high, and was black all over except the hind feet. This present was highly appreciated. And Père Gaubil mentions also that a portrait of this horse was in the last century still preserved in the imperial palace, with all the dimensions carefully noted. This vast animal was surely the prototype of the *Black Destrier* which Mr. Millais painted under Sir Ysenbras several years ago!

Of his residence in Malabar, and the Christians of St. Thomas there, Marignolli says:—

"These latter are the masters of the public steel-yard, from which I derived during my stay, as a perquisite of my office as Pope's legate, a hundred gold *fanams* every month, and a thousand when I came away. There is a church of St. George there, of the Latin communion, at which I dwelt. And I adorned it with fine paintings, and taught therein the Holy Law. And after I had been there some time, I went beyond the glory of Alexander the Great when he set up his column. For *I* also erected a stone as *my* landmark and memorial, and anointed it with oil! In sooth, it was a marble pillar, with a stone cross upon it, intended to last till the world's end. And it had the Pope's arms and my own engraven upon it, with inscriptions both in Indian and Latin characters. I consecrated and blessed it in the presence of an infinite multitude of people, and I was carried on the shoulders of the chiefs in a litter, or palankin, like Solomon's."

We all know of the altars that Alexander erected on the banks of Hyphasis; but the imagination of his legendary biographers in later days was not satisfied with his turning aside from India barely entered —(who indeed does not feel a fresh disappointment every time that the story is read?)—and in defiance of history they prolonged his expedition to the ends of the earth. The story how he reached the land of the Seres, at the extremity of Asia, and there erected a stone pillar, on which he inscribed, "Thus far came Alexander, king of the Macedonians," is nearly as old as classic times. We have some reason to believe that the pillar which our friend the legate thus erected in ambitious rivalry with Alexander, survived to our own day. The Dutch chaplain, Baldaens, writing in the latter part of the seventeenth century, says:—"Upon the rocks near the sea-shore of Quilon stands a stone pillar, erected there, as the inhabitants report, by St. Thomas.

I saw this pillar in 1662." Three hundred years of tradition might easily swamp the dim memory of John the Legate in that of Thomas the Apostle. Mr. Day, in his "Land of the Permauls," tells us that this pillar still exists; but Mr. Broadley Howard, in a recent work on the Malabar Christians, says it was washed away some years ago. We wish this notice may lead some one on that coast to inquire about it still.

We now come to the last of the travellers of whom it has been proposed to speak particularly. This is Abn Abdallah Mahomed, surnamed Ibn Batuta, *the* traveller, *par excellence*, of the Arab nation, as he was hailed by a saint of his religion whom he visited in India. He was born at Tangier, in Morocco, in 1304.

We cannot go into great detail on the wanderings of this traveller on a great scale. Suffice it to say that between his starting on his first journey at the age of twenty-one, and his final settlement in his native land at the age of fifty-one, his travels extended over a distance which, as well as we can compute it by a rough compass measurement, without allowance for excesses and deviations, amounted to at least 75,000 English miles. During the thirty years of his wanderings, he four times made the pilgrimage to Mecca, on one occasion residing there for three years; he traversed all Egypt twice, and both coasts of the Red Sea; he visited the eastern shores of Africa as far down as Quiloa in 9° south latitude; he several times visited Babylonia and Ispahan; he three times traversed Syria, visited all the Turkish sultanates into which Asia Minor was then divided; stayed a short time at Constantinople, and twice with Uzbek Khan on the banks of the Wolga, penetrating north to Bulgar on that river, a city standing in nearly the latitude of Carlisle. He then travelled across the steppes to Bokhara, and through Khorasan and Kabul, crossing the Hindu Kush by that very Panjsher valley where Friar Odoric saw such wonders. He then proceeded to Sind and Multan, and there received an invitation to the court of Mahomed Tughlak of Delhi, a soldier, a scholar, a patron of learned men, and at the same time one of the most sanguinary and capricious tyrants in history. Ibn Batuta continued about eight years in this sovereign's service, drawing a handsome salary, yet constantly getting into debt, and hanging like a perfect horse-leech on the royal bounty.

Towards the end of his residence at Delhi he fell into disfavour and suspicion, and in his fear betook himself to intense devotion and ascetic observances, giving all that he possessed to dervishes and the poor (he says nothing of his creditors!). The king, hearing of his reformed character, sent for him and named him chief of an embassy to China.

It was an ill-starred appointment. After a progress in state through Central India to Guzerat, where they embarked for Malabar, the party awaited at Calicut the departure of the China junks, which then annually visited the ports of Southern India. The Zamorin, or Prince of Calicut,

had prepared accommodation for the mission on board one of the large junks; but Ibn Batuta, having ladies with him, went to the shipping agent to obtain a private cabin for them, having, it would seem, in his usual happy-go-lucky style, deferred this to the last moment. The agent told him that the cabins were all taken up by the Chinese merchants (who had apparently *return-tickets*); there was one, however, without fittings, belonging to his own son-in-law, which Ibn Batuta could have. So one Thursday afternoon, in the early summer of 1343, our traveller's baggage and slaves, male and female, were put on board, while he stayed on shore to attend the Friday service before embarking. His colleagues with the presents for China were already on board. Next morning early his head-servant came to complain that the cabin was a wretched hole, and would never do. Appeal was made to the captain, a person who was, as Ibn Batuta tells us, "a great Amir," or, as our vulgar term would aptly translate it, "a very great swell." The captain said he could do nothing (so captains *always* say); but if they liked to go in a smaller vessel, called a *kakam*, it was at their service. Our traveller consented, and had his baggage and his womankind transferred to the *kakam*. The sea then began to rise (for the south-west monsoon had set in), and he could not embark. When he got up on Saturday morning he found both the junk and the *kakam* had weighed and left the harbour, and a gale of wind blowing. The junk was wrecked; the bodies of Ibn Batuta's colleagues in the embassy were cast up on the beach; and the *kakam's* people, seeing what had befallen their consort, made sail, carrying off with them our traveller's slaves, his girls, and gear, and leaving him there on the beach of Calicut gazing after them, with nought remaining to him but his prayer-carpet, ten pieces of gold, and an emancipated slave; which last absconded forthwith!

We cannot follow Ibn Batuta during the next few years' adventures, which carried him about the ports of Malabar, the Maldine Islands, Ceylon, and Madura; but eventually he found his way to Bengal, which he calls "an *inferno* full of good things," and thence to Sumatra and China. Here he professes still to have been received as the ambassador of Sultan Mahomed, and to have travelled over the whole length of the empire from Canton to Peking. That a part at least of his travels in China is genuine there can be no doubt, but it is highly questionable whether he ever was at Peking. His description of the palace arrangements there appears to be cooked up from his recollections of the Court of Delhi, and circumstances which he asserts to have taken place during his stay are totally inconsistent with Chinese history.

From China he returned *viâ* Sumatra to Malabar and Arabia, and thence, by devious wanderings, at last reached Fez, the capital of his native country, in 1349, after an absence of twenty-four years.

Here he professes to have rejoiced in the presence of his own

Sultan, whom he declares to surpass all the mighty monarchs of the East: in dignity, him of Irák; in person, him of India; in manner, him of Yemen; in courage, the king of the Turks; in long-suffering, the Cæsar of Constantinople; in devotion, him of Turkestan; and in knowledge, him of Sumatra!—a list of comparisons so oddly selected as almost to suggest irony. After all that he had seen, he comes to the conclusion that there is no country like his own west. "It is," says he, "the best of all countries. You have fruit in plenty; good meat and drink are easily come by; and, in fact, its blessings are so many that the poet has hit the mark when he sings:—

> 'Of all the four quarters of heaven the best
> (I'll prove it past question) is surely the west!
> 'Tis the west is the goal of the sun's daily race!
> 'Tis the west that first shows you the moon's silver face!'

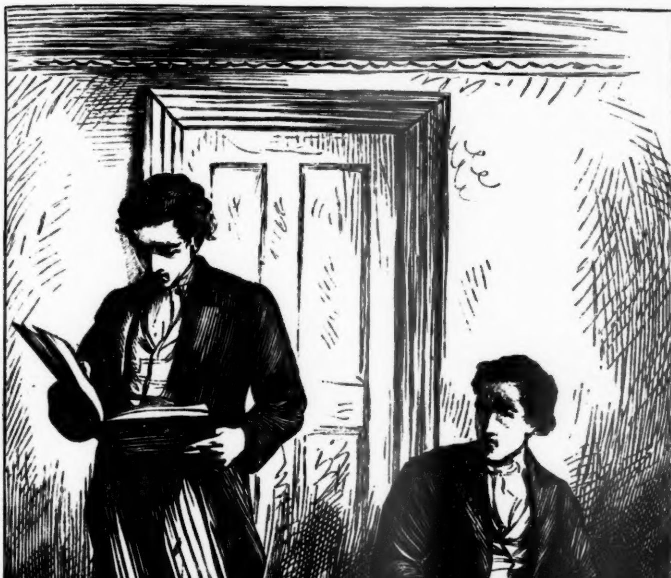
The *dirhems* of the west are but little ones, 'tis true; but then you get more for them!" (Just as in the good old days of another dear Land of the West; where, if the pound was but twentypence, the pint anyhow was two quarts!)

His travels, however, were not yet over; he traversed Andalusia and Granada, and penetrated to the heart of Negroland, before he finally settled. He died in 1377-78, aged seventy-three.

Ibn Batuta has drawn his own character in an accumulation of slight touches through the long history of his wanderings; but to do justice to the result in a few lines would require the hand of Chaucer, and something perhaps of his freedom of speech. Not wanting in acuteness nor in humane feeling; full of vital energy and enjoyment of life; infinite in curiosity; daring, restless, impulsive, sensual, inconsiderate, and extravagant; superstitious in his regard for the saints of his religion, and plying devout observances, especially when in difficulties; doubtless an agreeable companion, for we always find him welcomed at first, but clinging like one of the Ceylon leeches which he describes, when he found a full-blooded subject, and hence too apt to disgust his patron, and to turn to intrigues against them. Such are the impressions which one reader at least has gathered from the surface of his narrative.

We shall now quote one or two passages as examples of his narrative. The following extract shows how the Chinese so long ago, though without the aid of photography, had anticipated a modern expedient of the detective police:—

"As regards painting, no nation, whether of Christians or others, can come up to the Chinese; their talent for this art is something quite extraordinary. I may mention, among astonishing illustrations of this talent of theirs which I have witnessed myself, viz., that whenever I have happened to visit one of their cities, and to return to it after a while, I have always found my own likeness, and those of my companions, painted on the walls, or exhibited in the bazars. On one occasion that I visited the emperor's own city, in going to the imperial palace with my comrades, I passed through the bazar of the painters; we were



"WILFRID CUMBERMEDE."

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all dressed after the fashion of Irák. In the evening, on leaving the palace, I passed again through the same bazar, and there I saw my own portrait and the portraits of my companions, painted on sheets of paper, and exposed on the walls. We all stopped to examine the likenesses, and everybody found that of his neighbour to be excellent! . . . . . Indeed, the thing is carried so far that, if by chance a foreigner commits any action that obliges him to fly from China, they send his portrait into the outlying provinces to assist the search for him, and whenever the original of the portrait is discovered, they apprehend the man."

The next extract illustrates strikingly the manner in which the freemasonry of common religion facilitated the wanderings of the Mahomedans over the world. The traveller is staying at the city of Kanjanfu, apparently Kianchanfu in Kiangsi, where as usual he is hospitably received by his co-religionists :—

"One day, when I was in the house of Zahiruddin al Kurlani (the sheikh of the Mahomedans in this city), there arrived a great boat, which was stated to be that of one of the most highly-respected doctors of the law among the Mussulmans of those parts. They asked leave to introduce this personage to me, and accordingly he was announced as 'Our master, Kiwámuddin the Ceutan.'* I was surprised at the appellation; and when he had entered, and after exchanging the usual salutations we had began to converse together, it struck me that I knew the man. So I began to look at him earnestly, and he said, 'You look as if you knew me.' 'From what country are you?' I asked. 'From Ceuta.' 'And I am from Tangier!' So he recommenced his salutations, moved to tears at the meeting, till I caught the infection myself. I then asked him, 'Have you ever been in India?' 'Yes,' he said, 'I have been at Delhi, the capital.' When he said that, I recollected about him, and said, 'Surely you are Al-Bushri?' 'Yes, I am.' He had come to Delhi with his maternal uncle, Abu'l Kasim of Murcia. . . . . . I had told the Sultan of India about him, and he had given him 3,000 dinârs, and desired to keep him at Delhi. He refused to stay, however, for he was bent on going to China, and in that country he had acquired much reputation and a great deal of wealth. He told me that he had some fifty male slaves and as many female; and, indeed, he gave me two of each, with many other presents. Some years later, I met this man's brother in Negroland. What an enormous distance lay between those two!"

This meeting, in the heart of China, of the two Moors from the adjoining towns of Tangier and Ceuta, has a parallel in that famous, but we fear mythical, story of the capture of the Grand Vizier on the Black Sea by Marshal Keith, then in the Russian service. The venerable Turk's look of recognition drew from the marshal the same question that Al-Bushri addressed to Ibn Batuta, and the answer came forth in broad Fifeshire dialect—"Eh man! ay; I mind you weel, for my father was the bellman of Kirkaldy!"

Like all the travellers of that age, Ibn Batuta seems to lack words to describe the magnitude and glories of the city of Kinsai, or Hangcheufu. He represents himself as received with great honour there, both by the Mahomedan colony and by the officials of the Mongol government. The following, last of our extracts, refers to this :—

"The Amir Kustai (the Viceroy of the Province) is the greatest lord in China. He offered us hospitality at his palace, and gave us an entertainment at which

* *i.e.* of Ceuta, opposite Gibraltar.

the dignitaries of the city were present. He had got Mahomedan cooks to kill the cattle and cook the dishes for us, and this lord, great as he was, carved the meats and helped us with his own hands! We were his guests for three days, and one day he sent his son to escort us on a trip on the canal. We got into one barge, whilst the young lord got into another, taking singers and musicians along with him. The singers sang songs in Chinese, Arabic, and Persian. The lord's son was a great admirer of the Persian songs, and there was one of them sung by them which he caused to be repeated several times, so that I got it by heart from their singing. This song had a pretty cadence in it, and thus it went:—

'My heart given up to emotions
Was o'erwhelmed in waves like the ocean's,
But, betaking me to my devotions,
My troubles were gone from me!' *

Crowds of people in boats were on the canal. The sails were all of bright colours, the people carried parasols of silk, and the boats themselves were gorgeously painted. They skirmished with one another, and pelted each other with lemons and oranges. In the afternoon we went back to pass the evening at the Amir's palace, where the musicians came again and sang very fine songs.

"That same night a juggler, who was one of the Great Kaan's slaves, made his appearance, and the Amir said to him, 'Come and show us some of your wonders!' Upon this he took a wooden ball with several holes in it, through which long thongs were passed, and laying hold of one of these, slung it into the air. It went so high that we lost sight of it altogether. (It was the hottest season of the year, and we were outside in the middle of the palace court.) There now remained only a short end of a thong in the conjuror's hand, and he desired one of the boys who assisted him to lay hold of it and mount. He did so, climbing by the thong, and we lost sight of him. The conjuror then called to him three times, but, getting no answer, he snatched up a knife, as if in a great rage, laid hold of the thong, and disappeared in his turn! By-and-by he threw down one of the boy's hands, then a foot, then the other hand and the other foot, then the trunk, and, last of all, the head! Lastly, he came down himself, puffing and blowing, and with his clothes all bloody, kissed the ground before the Amir, and said something to him in Chinese. The Amir gave some order in reply, and our friend then took the lad's limbs, laid them together in their places, and gave a kick, when presto! there was the boy who got up and stood before us! All this astonished me beyond measure, and I had an attack of palpitation. . . . . . They gave me a cordial, however, which cured the attack. The Kazi of Khansi, Afkaruddin by name, was sitting next to me, and quoth he, '*Wallah!* 'tis my opinion there has been neither going up nor coming down, neither marring nor mending; 'tis all hocus pocus!'" †

With this marvellous story of prestidigitation, and the learned Kazi's comment on it, we must close these extracts.

The subject is large—China indeed in any point of view is a large subject—and it has been difficult to compress without running to dry bones. But we trust even this fragmentary view of one phase of the

* We may note that the "pretty cadence" of the lines which Ibn Batuta gives in the Persian, is precisely that of—

"We won't go home till morning,
Till daylight doth appear!"

† Omitting the marvellous disappearance in the air, this trick is still a favourite in China. See Doolittle's "Social Life of the Chinese," London ed., 1868, p. 543.

history of communication with the Chinese may have preserved some small flavour of that interest which has always attached to that remote and peculiar nation. The ancients felt this in the dim legends which crossed the length of Asia about the Seres dwelling in secluded peace and plenty on the shores of the Eastern Ocean; mediæval Christendom was strangely fascinated by the stories which these travellers, of whom we have been speaking, brought home—of the vast population, riches, and orderly civilisation of this newly-revealed land of Cathay; the rediscovery of the country as China by the Portuguese kindled a fresh curiosity which three centuries of partial knowledge scarcely abated. Familiarity of late years has in some degree wrought its proverbial result; but among all the clouds of change that are thickening on the world's horizon, some are surely big with great events for this hive of four hundred millions, for whom also Christ died. The empire, which has a history as old as the oldest of Chaldæa, seems to be breaking up. It has often broken up before, and been again united; it has often been conquered, and has either thrown off the yoke or absorbed its conquerors. But *they* derived what civilisation they had from the land which they invaded. The internal combustions that are *now* heaving the soil come in contact with a new and alien element of western origin. Who can guess what shall come of *that* chemistry?

HENRY YULE.

THE LITERARY LIFE.

II.

To take up, as promised, the subject of preparation for literature as a profession, I begin by saying that probably the greater number of those who try to find their way into literature never think of preparing for it at all, and that some of those who read this will no doubt wonder what kind of preparation can be possible or desirable. Let me be excused for being autobiographical: it will prove the shortest way of getting into the heart of the subject.

The Scripture-loving people among whom my lot was first cast used to say of me that I had "the pen of a ready writer," from the time when I could use the pen. But long before I had learnt writing I had a style of what shall I say ?—slate-pencilmanship of my own, and, on the slate, "lisped in numbers, for the numbers came." By the time I was ten years old I had produced plenty of verse, which, merely as such, was good, and which probably contained some faint elements of poetry. But my shyness and self-distrust were extreme, and this continued up to long after the time when it had been proved that other people were willing to hear me, or read me. These lines may possibly, nay, probably be read by an editor who will remember something of a poetical contributor whose rhymes he used to print, but who utterly disappeared and shot suddenly down the horizon upon being politely requested in the correspondents' column to furnish his name and address. This, which I suppose would have set the hair of many contributors on end with rapturous visions of cheques and conversaziones, was quite sufficient to shut me up, though I was a grown man with children. The good-natured editor had heard his first and last of me, unless he recognises me under this fresh disguise. I will help his memory, if he yet lives, in the following manner:—Supposing I wanted to get hold of him by advertisement, I should insert in the agony column of the *Times* or *Telegraph* a notice beginning—"The Ascent of the Peter Botte. If the Editor who once, &c., &c." Further than this I decline to go,—we have all our feelings. The upshot of this is that I had always a certain amount of "encouragement" given to me — especially in matters of verse. My rhymes were almost always inserted, and promptly; and a distinguished man of letters (never mind how I happened to get into communication with him—it cost me agonies) told me that verse was my "spere." While I write this I am thinking of Dickens's old stager, who failed to make a journey by rail, getting miserably lost at sta-

tions, and whose wife was told by the housemaid that "railways wasn't master's spear."

It is not an impossible thing to make money by writing verses, but in order to do so you must either have an independent standpoint to begin from, or you must be in such a position that you can afford to go through a long probation, *before* you arrive at the period when you can make poetry pay. Even then the chances are a million to one against success. My own position and feelings at the time when I began to think about writing for money, are expressed in certain paragraphs from my own pen, which I will quote directly. And I should never have begun to think of writing for money at all if it had not been that I was, in a manner, driven to it by finding certain occupations, which I need not describe, telling on my health.

The passage I was about to quote is as follows :—

"Any one who wishes to make a serious mark upon the literature of his country had better, if he possibly can, find some other means of getting his bread than writing. To write for immortality, and for the journals too, is about the most harassing work a man could engage in. There are, of course, cases to the contrary—cases of men who have a fine physique to back the large brain, and whose genius is consequently of the productive and popular order. Such men can kill the two birds with one stone, but woe betide the weakling who tries the same thing!

"In all cases where the brain, whether intrinsically or by association with a capricious physique, is delicate and incapable of incessant production, the problem—difficult of solution, but not always insoluble—is to find some not too uncongenial employment, which shall yield the nucleus of an income, and leave a good deal of leisure too. Not a clerk's place, if the man be of the Campbell order, but something less continuous, if even more arduous. Men of imaginative mould should choose, if they can, pursuits which leave large *gaps* of leisure, even if they pay for that advantage by being overworked at occasional times."

I must here say, harsh as the judgment will seem to a good many people, that it is all but impossible for a person to use any form of teaching (except the most mechanical, and scarcely then) as a means of earning a livelihood, and yet maintain perfect independence and purity of conscience. Journalists, who are bent to the yoke, will scoff at this, but the fox without a tail laughs all the world over at the fox who insists on keeping his; and I maintain that what I say is true. At all events I thought so, and determined that I would, at whatever cost, find out some way of earning, at least, bread and water, so that I might leave myself without excuse if, at the end of every writing day, I could not say, "This hand has never written what this brain did not think, or this heart did not feel."

Besides this difficulty, there were others in my way which forced

themselves upon my attention. My natural inclination was always either to look at things "in the aibstract" and run off into metaphysics, or else to be what people called transcendental, or florid, or, still more frequently, mystical. And I uniformly observed that writing to which the people I knew—my fool-ometers in fact—would apply these terms, was certain to be rejected by editors. I also observed, and past experience has amusingly confirmed this, that editors who will look very jealously after what you say while your articles are new to them, will let you write almost what you please after a little time. Putting one thing with another, I began a determined course of preparatory study—that is to say, I minutely analysed the sort of writing for which I found there was a market. In this way I pulled to pieces every novel and every leading article that I came across. Thus, I took so many pages of a story and chopped it all up into incident, conversation, and comment. Leading articles gave me a great deal of trouble. I found that I could write articles that were printed when the subject excited me, *or* when the appeal in the discussion was to first principles. Hence, an article of mine on a revolution, or on the law of husband and wife would, I found, be welcomed; but for politics, in the ordinary sense of the word, I had not a whiff of instinct. Although I always could, and can, adapt means to ends by dint of hard thinking, yet I found myself destitute of all sagacity in dealing with the by-play of minor motives, and utterly lost—though scornfully as well as consciously lost—in handling what people call politics. I shall never forget, and my friend now beyond the grave will perhaps remember in heaven, the outcome of his asking me to attend vestry meetings—and edit a local newspaper. This was not from any contempt of common things, but from a sense that everybody would get a rise out of me which would make my attempt to fulfil editorial duties a farce. My instinct was a true instinct; and, after accepting the engagement, I gave it up, because I was satisfied that, by attempting to keep it, I should put him to more inconvenience than I could possibly do by breaking it. He perfectly understood, laughed, and remained my friend to the last.

The things, then, that gave me the most trouble, considered as studies, were leading articles and essays on current politics. With regard to the latter, or indeed both, I never could get a firm footing to begin with. It was Austria wants to do this, and Prussia wants to do the other; the Bourbons aimed at so-and-so, and Spain had her reasons for standing aloof. But I was, for one thing, unable to see that there was any ground for all this sort of thing, outside the fancy of the *rédacteur;* and then, again, I could never personify Austria, or Spain, or Prussia, or France. My mind, or, as Lord Westbury puts it, what I was pleased to call my mind, said—"Austria? But what is Austria? It is so many roods of ground." It was intelligible to me that a man should want to marry a particular woman or to secure a particular estate, for its

beauty or use; but that Schwarzenburg and Thiers and Palmerston, and A. and B., and who-not, should be playing a political "game" with earnestness enough to deserve or justify a serious leading article, was to me utterly unintelligible. This was not for want of strong English feeling and even passionate pride in "speaking the tongue that Shakespeare spake," but from my general incapacity to understand why people should be always meddling with each other. When I was a little boy I remember hearing a shock-headed, wart-nosed tradesman, brandishing a ham knife, holding forth thus:—"What does a man go and be a politician for? His own aggrandyzement. What makes a man go and be a clergyman? His own aggrandyzement. What makes me go and keep a 'am-and-beef shop? My own aggrandyzement." Well, I had been brought up in some loneliness, and chiefly in the society of those who had a consuming desire to make certain opinions prevail; the opinions being rooted in first principles, and the only means dreamt of being fair persuasion. And up to this time of my life, late as it was, I had only a very faint appreciation of the activity of the "aggrandyzement" motive in the affairs of the world. Besides this obstacle to my appreciating current political, or even much of current social criticism, there was another difficulty. Leading articles seemed to me to begin from nothing and to lead to nowhere, and it was not till after most persevering study that I succeeded in cutting open the bellows and finding where the wind came from. Then, again, I carefully examined the magazines, and very carefully indeed the Notices to Correspondents. But at thirty years of age I was still so green as to write one day to the *Times*, pointing out an error of fact and a clear fallacy of deduction in one of its leaders, doing this in the full, undoubting expectation that they would make the necessary correction. About this time I had an introduction to Mr. Mowbray Morris, and saw him in his room at the *Times*' office. Nothing came of it, and I expect he thought I was a real Arcadian. I was.

My letters of introduction were rather numerous, and addressed to people who could probably have helped me, if they had taken pains; nay, some of whom would probably have done so if I had "pushed" a little. But this was impossible to me; and I was much surprised that clever men—as I had reason to suppose many of these persons to whom I had letters really were—did not seem able at a glance to feel sure that this real Arcadian had a share of honesty, application, and versatility which might make it politic, merely as a matter of business, to treat him civilly. The only person, however, who was really insolent, was a man who had written chiefly on "love" and "brotherhood." I am not writing down a cynical fib, but the simple truth. He certainly annoyed me, and I thought to myself, "One of these days I will serve you out." I have, of course, never served him out; the only effect of his rudeness has been that I have been

able to speak of him with cheerful frankness. There was some fun in situations of this kind; and I used to enjoy the feeling that while, perhaps, some one to whom I had a letter was snubbing me, or at least treating me *de haut en bas*, he was behaving thus to a stranger who would be able to his dying day to describe every look of the superior being's eyes, every line of his face, every word he said, the buttons on his coat, how high the gas was, and what tune the organ-grinder was playing in the next street, while the little scene came off.

After a time I was told by an old friend of a gentleman who, he thought, might help me. Him I hunted up, by a circuitous route, though I knew neither his name, his qualifications, nor his address. He is a man of genius and of good-nature, and through him I got really useful introductions. From this time there were no *external* difficulties in my way. But conscientious scruples, and personal habits of my own, remained to constitute real and very serious obstacles. I was not what Mr. Carlyle, describing the literary amanuensis who helped him in his Cromwell labours, "hardy." The manner in which the ordinary journalist knocks about was always a wonder to me. I could neither stand gas, nor tobacco, nor pottering about, nor hunting people up in the intervals of literary labour, nor what those who know me have (too) often heard me call "jaw." I mean the kind of debate which goes on at discussion societies, and among even intelligent men when public topics arise after dinner. It is half sincere; it is wanting in the nicety of distinction which love of truth demands; it is full of push, and loudness, personal vanity, and the zest of combat: so it seemed to me that no one could have much of it without loss, not only of self-respect, but also of fineness of perception and clearness of conscience. As unpleasant in another way was what we may perhaps call the clever "club" talk of literary men. Here you find men trying apparently which can say the smartest thing—to quote a *mot* of a living writer of admirable *vers de société*, "they call their jokes 'quips,' but the work is so hard that they might just as well be called 'cranks.'" On the whole, my tastes and habits were about as unfavourable for making way in journalism as could possibly be supposed. The necessity of keeping a conscience—and obstinately keeping it under a glass case, too—was a far more serious matter.

It so happened, however, that immediately on starting with my pen in a professional way, I got a character for writing good critical papers. The very first critical essay I every wrote was quoted, and noticed in high quarters; and it was passed round that I had a quick scent in literary matters. But the way in which this worked was very amusing. Everybody went about to flood me with reviewing work. It was quite natural; but rather wide of the mark. When a man who possesses a pretty good critical scent takes up a book that is either by goodness or badness suggestive, there are "three courses"

open to him. He may *characterise* it in a few sentences; but half-a-dozen lines, even if they are bright and exhaustive in their way, are not a review—are not, in fact, what is wanted of a journalist. Or he may make it a topic, and produce an article as long as a small book. This, again, however good, is not what is wanted of a journalist. The third course, to write a column or two about a book that has no particular life in it is the arduous one. And arduous indeed it is.

There was another difficulty which stood in my way as a journalist. There is a class of article for which there is always a demand. I mean the kind of article which teaches one-half of the world how the other half lives. I hope literary beginners who may read these lines will take note of that. For this kind of writing I had some qualifications—quickness of eye, a tenacious memory of detail, and a lively sense of fun; but then I could not knock about and come up to time. A day in Spitalfields would make me ill. There was a case in which under unusually favourable conditions, I had to refuse a task of this kind. The kind and discerning friend who proposed it I met by exposing my own unfitness in the matter of knocking about, and I said, "Mr. So-and-so is your man; he will do it better than I shall in many respects." My friend answered, "No, not in every respect; he will not put into it the feeling that you will." In spite of this encouragement, I declined the work, and for the soundest reasons. But any beginner who can do writing of this description, with plenty of detail,—and without interspaces of meditation, such as would come down by main force upon my pen,—may make sure of earning money by literature.

The practical upshot of most of the foregoing memoranda is this: It so happened that I usually got into print when I desired it; that my very first article "professionally" written was printed in good company; and that I had few difficulties outside of my own personal peculiarities. But how was this? Just thus (shade of Artemus Ward!): I had for years made the working literature of the day a study; knew the things that tended to exclude a man's writing from magazines and newspapers, and the special points that I had to guard against. Is there anything wrong in suggesting that not one in a thousand of the class called "literary aspirants" has ever made the working literature of the hour a systematic study?

The articles, like the books, of the class called literary aspirants are usually rejected, even when they have merit, upon what may be termed points of literary form. This paragraph is good, and *that* is good, and this other is really fine; but the whole thing wants licking into shape. Thus, an editor or reviewer of experience and vision can almost certainly tell amateur work at a glance. See some interesting remarks by Mr. Herman Merivale in a recent "Junius" paper in the *Cornhill* upon the ease with which literary work is recognised as that of a practised pen. We are sometimes told,—and thousands of

"aspirants" think with bitterness,—that the distinction between the amateur and the practised writer is idle, because everybody is an amateur to begin with. But I have shown that this is not true. In spite of long practice in the use of the pen, I made working literature a deliberate study, and others have done the same; that is, they have not relied on mere aptitude. "Look," says the writer of a formless novel, "look at 'Jane Eyre!'" Well, by all means look at "Jane Eyre,"—you can hardly look at a more instructive case. Currer Bell did not succeed as an amateur; she had been a hard student of the conditions of success, and she attended to them so far as her knowledge went, and so far as she desired to use them. Of literary ambition proper she had none, nor—if I may speak of myself in the same sentence—have I. But whatever one's motive, or impulse, may be in writing, he must pay some attention to matters of literary form, and he must comply with such of them as have a just and natural foundation. He is, in fact, as much bound to comply with these as he is bound *not* to comply with those which demand some sacrifice of truthfulness, self-respect, and clearness of conscience.

Paradoxical as some may think it, the chief hindrance to honest literary success is literary vainglory to begin with. This involves splash, false fire, chaotic "out-lay" (to use a surveyor's phrase) of the work, and foolish and exaggerated ideas of the "success" within reach. There was a one-volume novel, published a year or two ago, in which a young journalist, whose suit has been rejected by a young lady's "'aughty" mother, and who is under a cloud for a time, makes money at a rate which must have set every journalist in England laughing, and then suddenly blazes out in the society of dukes and Cabinet ministers because he has written a crushing exposure in a daily paper of the probable working of "Clause 5" of a certain bill. This particular book was a very innocent one, and no more vainglorious than Currer Bell's notions of the Duke of Wellington. In that specimen sheet of her handwriting given by Mrs. Gaskell in the memoir, she shows us the Duke at the War Office, putting on his hat at five minutes to four, telling the clerks that they might go, and scattering "largess" among the clerks with a liberal hand as he takes his leave for the day. *Sancta simplicitas!* we cry; and there is an end. But every writing man knows that "aspirants," as a class, are eaten up with vainglory. They want distinction and the run of the pleasures of a "literary" life as they apprehend them. They have visions of the tenth thousand, and flaming reviews, and gorgeous society. I see with infinite amusement the ideas some people have of the sort of life I lead. They think—they almost tell me so in words—that I have always got my pocket full of orders for the theatre, that I can button-hole anybody I please, that I go to the Queen's garden-parties, that I sit, with a halo round my head, in gilded saloons, saying, or hearing said, brilliant *mots;* that I drink

champagne with actresses behind the scenes, and that, if they offend me, I shall at once put them in *Punch* or the *Times*. I have also been told—almost point-blank in some cases—that it was only my jealousy and desire to "keep others down," that prevented my procuring immediate admission into periodicals for articles submitted to me by A. or B., which were perhaps of the silliest and most despicable quality. I have had this said or hinted to my face, or behind my back, about articles that were utterly unprintable, at times when my own papers had been waiting months—three, six, or eight months—for insertion in places where I had what is called "interest." People who have—who are *capable* of having—notions of this kind, I would certainly do my best to keep out of literature; not, however, from "jealousy," but because they are morally unfit for it.

This opens the way for a word or two which I promised upon "cliqueism." That literary men, like other people, form knots and groups, is a matter of course; and "what for no?" That there must be partiality and some degree of exclusiveness in these, is certain. That there are quarrels I am sure, for I hear of them, and discern their consequences. But so there are everywhere. In some hole-and-corner connections there may be jealousy and exclusiveness founded on money reasons. But, personally, I have never once come into collision with anything of the kind. As a hindrance to "aspirants," I do not believe such a thing exists. The chief deterring or exclusive influence I have ever suffered from has been that of a kindness so much in excess of my capacity to make fair returns, that I have flinched from accepting it. Literary men, as I know them, come nearer to Wieland's Cosmopolites ("Die Abderiten") than any other class.

If anybody thinks there is too much of what is called "egotism" in these notes, I disagree with him. It is a pity I have not had the moral courage to be more "egotistic" still, and I wish other people would set me the example. This is a world in which you cannot wear your heart upon your sleeve; but it is for a base and disgusting reason, namely, that there are so many daws and other unclean birds about. It was not my intention to append my signature, but the Editor did it, and his judgment in such a matter is better than mine.

MATTHEW BROWNE.

NURSING AS A PROFESSION FOR LADIES.

The want of remunerative occupations suitable for gentlewomen is, in these days, painfully felt and universally acknowledged; and fresh schemes are continually being started to remedy the evil. It has been proposed to throw open the learned professions to the competition of women, and to remove the various disabilities which keep the sex in a position of inferiority. But it appears that there is one department of activity peculiarly their own, which they have hitherto failed to make the vantage-ground it might become. We refer to nursing.

Much has been written and said about nursing as a department of Christian benevolence, and all honour is due to those noble and compassionate women who have proved that love can dignify and consecrate the most repulsive tasks, and who have made the scourge of cholera and typhus the opportunity of carrying elevating and purifying influences into some of the foulest spots of our great cities. But their efforts do not meet the necessities of the particular case we are considering.

There is no reason why the rich should not obtain for money services which are freely bestowed upon the poor. Ladies will now take fees as doctors, but they will nurse only for charity. Why is this? It is because nursing is considered menial. But it is not; it is essentially a profession, and waits only for the right persons to practise it, in order to take its proper rank. Surgery was counted menial a hundred and fifty years ago, and then the surgeons were servants to the physicians. But it was made a profession by a few men who saw what it was capable of becoming, and brought scientific knowledge to bear upon their practice. It needs now only a few qualified women to elevate nursing to the same rank.

If ladies would devote two or three years to thorough study, coupled with practical training, they might at the end of that time be equipped with a knowledge and experience which are not now to be had from nurses, but which are very much desired by medical men. Doctors, especially those whose large practice obliges their visits to be limited in time and infrequent, do feel the want of efficient and intelligent help in the sick-room; indeed physicians say that the science of medicine will not be perfected until accurate and constant observations of all the stages of a disease are made and reported by some qualified individual. Who could do this so well as

a trained nurse, whose general culture and education had quickened her powers of accurate observation and correct description?

Invalids of the upper classes would soon feel the advantage of being tended by a lady of refinement and scientific training, and would be willing to remunerate her services at such a rate as would in time repay the expenses of her preparatory study. It is not of course to be supposed that many such nurses would command their two and three guineas a day (though some undoubtedly would, and deservedly); but the mere fact that such remuneration is being obtained by a few ladies at the head of the profession will raise the position of all.

In proof of this, witness the doctors practising at a shilling a visit. For the sake of the prizes to be had by those who reach the top of the ladder, they are willing patiently to work their way upwards; or even where no such ambition exists, they profit by the rank which the intellectual superiority of the first physicians secures to all.

The questions here arise—What is to be included in this special training? and is there, at the present moment, any possibility of obtaining the requisite instruction, both theoretic and practical? To the first question we may broadly answer that the training should consist in teaching people to know what they see. In order to make intelligent and useful observation, it is not enough that a nurse be gifted with quick perception; she must be furnished with a knowledge of physiology, and kindred branches of medical science. Habits of accuracy are so essential to a nurse of the class referred to, that the pursuit of other collateral studies which shall tend to the cultivation of such habits may be desirable. But while a portion of her time is devoted to the acquisition of theoretic knowledge, the student's work will be mainly in the sick-room. It is while working in the hospital wards, under the instruction of physicians and the head-nurses, that she will acquire her most valuable knowledge.

In answer to the second question suggested, we must state that no system of theoretic instruction has yet been organised; but there is no doubt that, if the right people came forward, they would soon be provided with the necessary instruction. There are many places where ladies can acquire efficiency in actual nursing; arrangements have been made in the Children's Hospital in Great Ormond Street, and in the Middlesex Hospital, for the training of a certain number of lady probationers; and the British Nursing Association in Cambridge Place, Paddington (which undertakes the entire nursing of two London hospitals), and Miss Merryweather's Training School for Nurses in Dover Street, Liverpool, have been founded for this purpose.

A lady may be received into either of these establishments as boarder on the payment of from half a guinea to a guinea a week: she is expected to spend the day in nursing, but the evenings are her own.

If there existed a class of nurses such as we have described, the

fitting remuneration would soon be forthcoming. What will not men give for a little chance of lengthening out life? If once it were known to be worth while to secure such a skilled nurse, no money would be grudged her. Only ladies must make their services valuable before they can have the right to command their own terms.

Even the charitable aspect of the case is best met in this way: as medical charity is better now than it would be if doctors acted only from charity, so will nursing become more efficient than if it were practised only by amateurs. The things that are worst done are always those that are supposed to require no special training. Witness teaching, of which all are supposed to be capable, but which so few can do well.

We are often hearing of ladies who have ruined their health by trying, untrained, to nurse their friends. Many a wife and mother has continued night and day to watch by the sick-bed, who would gladly have taken proper rest had she been able to trust the nurse; and yet with all her care, she has not succeeded in her conflict with disease as a more experienced person might have done. The crises of domestic sickness are those in which it is most necessary to guard against the undue encroachment of the feelings upon the judgment, and a stranger can often nurse really better than the fondest relative. Besides, there is often no occasion for the alabaster box of a delicate frame to be *broken* in order that the generous ointment of loving care may be poured out.

One objection has been raised to this scheme—namely, that such lady-nurses would not be willing to do all that is required in a sick-room, and yet few would be disposed to employ two people to do the work which usually falls to the lot of one. To this we reply, that the higher class of nurses would not be called in for a slight illness, while in severe cases, the nurse's time and attention are so constantly required by the invalid, that it is impossible for her to dispense with help. Besides, a nurse ought never to be over-tired; it would, therefore, be undesirable for her to expend her valuable strength in doing work which could as well be left to the servants in the house. A lady who is a good nurse will never consider herself above rendering any service in the sick-room, any more than a medical man does in times of emergency, but, from the nature of the case, her work will usually be of the higher kind.

The demand for good nurses is already so great, that the influence of this movement on the general condition of women would be immense, infinitely greater than having women doctors, who would always be few and would require wealth. Doctors, even after having passed through a long medical training, have very long to wait before their practice begins in any sense to pay, whereas nurses would very soon meet with employment. Their term of training, extending perhaps to two or three years, need not involve the expenditure of

more than two hundred pounds—probably not so much—and as soon as ever they were ready for work, they would find the work ready for them, and they would speedily be indemnified for the original outlay.

Were this scheme realised, its effects would be felt all through society; a legitimate ambition would be open to all, for nurses might well become rich; we should then have women drafted off from all manner of unsuitable occupations and brought to devote themselves to the one most congenial to them. Especially would the advantage be felt among educators; some of those who now become governesses, because they know of no other means of earning a livelihood befitting their station, will gladly devote themselves to the work for which nature or home experience may have fitted them, and in it may rise to a higher rank than any to which they would have attained as teachers. The demand for good nurses is really very great already; they now command what would by governesses be considered as good salaries, and are far oftener sought for than found.

Then, too, the general standard of nursing would be raised; the lower class of nurses, through working under such trained superiors, would become more efficient, and would always have before them the prospect of rising.

A collateral advantage of the practice of nursing as a profession would undoubtedly be felt, in that it would develop in one typical example the relation of men and women's work to each other. Waiving the question whether woman might or might not be made capable, with man's advantages, of doing man's work, it surely will not be denied that a sphere of action would be preferable in which she would not have to compete with him, but in which her own peculiar endowments would give her a special advantage. And here is an opportunity for showing how a woman's work may complement man's in the true order of nature. Where does the character of the "help-meet" come out so strikingly as in the sick-room, where the quick eye, the soft hand, the light step, and the ready ear, second the wisdom of the physician, and execute his behests better than he himself could have imagined?

Besides these obvious advantages, it will, no doubt, be found, in the course of their scientific training, that women discover special aptitudes for particular branches of professional knowledge and practice, and the science of medicine itself will in time be benefited by the fruitful co-operation of the two orders of workers.

It is, perhaps, not too much to hope that if this experiment of mutual help succeeds, it may stimulate attempts in other departments of labour, which have hitherto been monopolised by the stronger sex, or which have been the objects of a rivalry tending to lower both the quality and the remuneration of the work done.

CHARLOTTE HADDON.

KARL VON MOOR.

"Quæ medicamenta non sanant, ferrum sanat; quæ ferrum non sanat, ignis sanat."—HIPPOCRATES.

"THE greatest of the poetical idealists was Schiller; he brought back the abstract ideal to the fulness of nature, as Goethe also did; but he did further what Goethe did not do—he elevated nature up to the ideal. His heroes were, in romantic poetry, what the gods of the Greek sculpture were to the Greeks—divine men, human gods."

So wrote Wolfgang Menzel, of whom it was said by one of his countrymen, "Er schreibt wie ein Britte;"* and that this eulogy upon "the purest of poets" is not unmerited, will be readily admitted when Wallenstein, Carlos, Posa, and William Tell become the objects of criticism; but perhaps the most touching, as well as the most passionate, of Schiller's creations has hardly been allowed his place among "divine men," although gifted with every noble quality of manhood in overflowing abundance.

In the character of Karl von Moor there are depths which are far from being easily sounded; and not to be thoroughly understood is, for the most part, to be summarily condemned.

Great as was the success of *The Robbers*, and although its publication produced an extraordinary sensation, not only in Germany, but in the literature of the world, grave and steady people did not like it. They imagined it to advocate revolutionary principles, and to be calculated to injure the cause of morality.

Because a few empty-headed young men, impatient of restraint, and greedy of adventures, were found attempting to ape the character of the robber-chief by imitating his excesses, it was supposed that the work would do incalculable injury to the youth of the period; and because the boundless imagination of the author was able to conceive and to paint the depths of vice and iniquity into which the noblest of mankind may fall, it was gathered that a rough and ferocious sensuality was upheld by him, against the whole fabric of narrow-minded conventionality.

In Schiller's preface to the first edition of his *Robbers* he describes his hero as "a mind for which the greatest crimes have only charms through the glory which attaches to them, the energy which their perpetration requires, and the dangers which attend them;" and in an advertisement to the play which was supposed to

* "He writes like an Englishman."

have been used as a prologue, he adds that it is "the picture of a great misguided soul, endowed with every gift of excellence, yet lost in spite of all its gifts; unbridled passions and bad companionship corrupt his heart, lead him on from crime to crime, until at last he stands at the head of a band of murderers, heaps horror upon horror, and plunges from precipice to precipice into the lowest depths of despair. Great and majestic in misfortune, by misfortune reclaimed, and led back to the paths of virtue; such a man shall you pity and hate, abhor yet love, in the Robber Moor."

In the delineation of such a character, "the unsearchable abysses of man's destiny are laid open before us, black, profound, and appalling as they seem to the young mind when it first attempts to explore them. The obstacles that thwart our faculties and wishes, the deceitfulness of hope, the nothingness of existence, are sketched in the sable colours so natural to the enthusiast when he first ventures upon life and compares the world that is without him to the anticipations that were within."

The famous soliloquy which has been so often compared to those of Cato and Hamlet, and which is perhaps a still nearer copy of the Duke's advice to Claudio in *Measure for Measure*, describes vividly the darkness and confusion of a mind which, missing the only clue to the labyrinth of this world's inequalities, becomes bewildered and almost unsettled by difficulties of its own creating. "It is all so dark," the unhappy Moor exclaims; "no clue, no guiding star!" The quenchless thirst for happiness, the haunting dream of an ideal of unattained perfection, the want of moral concord in the midst of a universe which is otherwise filled with the sweetest harmonies, assures him that there must be "something more;" and yet although almost ashamed of possessing "what none but fools would keep," the portals through which our finite nature shrinks to pass are so filled with ghosts of horror that the shipwrecked intellect falls back almost with a feeling of relief upon those evils which are known rather than encounter that terrible dread of "something after death."

> "The undiscovered country from whose bourne
> No traveller returns."

The scenes and characters employed to paint the darker dramas of life must of necessity grate upon the ear like a series of moral discords; but in the midst of a darkness so terrible we never cease to follow the career of the Robber Chief with an almost painful intensity of interest. "An archangel, though in ruins," his lofty daring, his innate nobility and magnanimity of nature, the fire which animates his every feeling, the glow of passion which purifies and refines even the fury into which he is goaded by his miseries, we find nothing unnatural or overstrained in the love which follows him unaltered through the crimes and follies of his career; and although, like his

Amelia, we sail with him "on troubled seas," we have no feeling but that of pity for sufferings so intense, and for a fate so unutterably sad.

In the second scene of the tragedy, a tavern on the frontiers of Saxony, Karl von Moor is discovered intent upon a book. He is reading "of great men in his Plutarch."

One of the wild companions who has shared with him the follies of his university career at Leipsic, is drinking at a table beside him. It is the moment when, having thrown himself at the feet of his father, in a letter full of grief and repentance, he is expecting confidently that forgiveness which should open to him a new life.

He is thoroughly sick of "the old fooleries," and loves to picture to himself the sweetness of receiving pardon, help, and compassion from his beloved ones. The letter arrives,—he is forbidden to return in language which puts an end to all hope of forgiveness, and his agony knows no bounds.

The lawless associates who surround him seize only too readily upon the madness caused by despair, and induce him to enter into their wild scheme of forming a band of robbers, which, according to their view of the case, is calculated to "relieve rich misers of half those cares which only scare golden sleep from their eyelids, to force hoarded coin into circulation, to restore the equalisation of property —to bring back the Golden Age."

Without Moor they confess themselves to be "a body without a soul," and he consents to become their captain. "Away then," he exclaims,

> "with human sympathies and pity!
> I have no father more, nor loved one more;
> And blood and death shall teach me to forget
> That ever anything was dear!"

The lawless band of which he now becomes the chief spreads terror over the whole country. "Leagued with desperadoes, directing their savage strength to actions more and more audacious, there is still," in the words of Carlyle, "a towering grandeur about him, a whirlwind force of passion and will, which catches our hearts, and puts the scruples of criticism to silence. The strong agony with which he feels the present, the certainty of that stern future which awaits him, which his own eye never loses sight of, makes us lenient to his crimes. When he pours forth his wild recollections, or still wilder forebodings, there is a terrible vehemence in his expressions which overpowers us, in spite of both his and their extravagance."

The scene on the hills beside the Danube, when, weary and despairing, the robber chief flings himself down, and, looking at the "glorious sunset, the golden harvest, the trees bending beneath their load of fruits, the vines so full of promise," recalls the past, vainly invoking the old time—

"When he had failed to sleep
If he had left unsaid his evening prayers,"

is peculiarly touching and tender; and nothing can be more exquisite than the soliloquy into which he falls, upon returning to the old haunts of his childhood, which are still so dear. We cannot forbear quoting the whole of it, the more especially as *The Robbers* has never been transfused into blank verse, and that the lofty tone of the tragedy naturally induces such metrical adornment:—

"All hail, earth of my fatherland! all hail,
Heaven—sunshine of my fatherland! Ye meads,
Vales, streamlets, woods! I greet ye all! How sweetly
The breeze is wafted from my native hills!
What floods of balmy perfume wander forth
To welcome the poor exile! Paradise!
Land of the poet! Hold, Moor! for thy foot
Has ventured into holy ground!
See there
Still in the old court-yard the swallow's nest,
The little garden gate; and there the meadow
Where thou as Alexander didst lead on
Thy Macedonians to Arbela's plains,
And further on, the grassy hillock, whence
Thou hurl'dst the Persian satrap, waving high
Thy conquering banners!
In the outcast's soul
Revives the golden May of boyish years!
I was so happy then! so cloudlessly,
So wholly happy! Now there lie my hopes
In ruins round me! Here should I have stood
A great, a noble, and an honoured man.
Here have lived o'er again my happy boyhood
In my Amalia's blooming children! Here
Have been the idol of my people. This
Was by the fiends forbid! Why came I here
To suffer like the captive when the clank
Of his grim chain awaketh him from dreams
Of liberty! No, let me wander back
To wretchedness; the captive had forgotten
The light of day, but over him the dream
Of freedom flashed like lightning in the night
To leave it darker!"

The closing scene of the tragedy works out with painful distinctness the strange moral obliquity which, like some remorseless fate, pursues the unhappy Karl, rendering null and void the nobler qualities of his nature. In it both love and hate, remorse and fury, hope and despair, struggle by turns for mastery, and the soul which seems framed only to be the plaything of conflicting passions, gives up the battle at last, with the conviction that his destruction is the will of Heaven:—

"I was a fool!
To dream that I could mend the world through crime,

And minister to law with lawlessness!
I dreamed, O Providence, that I could whet
The notches of Thy sword; could right Thy scales!
Vain trifling! Here at last I stand among
The ruins I have made, with bitter wailing!
To Thee alone belongeth vengeance! Thou
Needest no mortal hand! I have no power
To call the Past back—but one thing remains
Whereby I may endeavour to atone
To the offended laws, and to restore
The order I have broken.
I remember
A poor day-labourer with whom I spoke
On my way hither, toiling for his bread.
A thousand Louis d'or is the reward
Of him who shall deliver up alive
The Robber Captain: *That man may be served.*"

CECILIA E. MEETKERKE.

HANNAH.

A Novel.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "JOHN HALIFAX, GENTLEMAN."

CHAPTER IX.

HANNAH'S waking-up on the morning after her brother-in-law's return was one of the most painful sensations she had ever known, the more so as it was so unusual. To her healthy temperament the morning hour was generally the best of the day. Not Rosie herself, who always woke up as lively as a young linnet in a thorn-bush, enjoyed it more than Aunt Hannah did. But now things seemed changed. She had gone to bed at once, and fallen asleep immediately; for there are times when the brain, worn out by long tension, collapses the instant we lie down—Nature forcing upon it the temporary stupefaction which is its only preservative.

Now even she could not shake off weariness, nor rise as usual to look at one of those glorious winter sunrises which only active people see. She dreaded the dawn—she shrank from the sun. For he brought her her daily duties, and how she should ever fulfil them as heretofore she could not tell.

First, how should she again meet Mr. Rivers? What position should she hold towards him? Had her sister lived, he would have been to her nothing at all; regarded with the sacred indifference with which every pure-minded woman regards every other woman's husband. Now, what was he? Not her brother—except by a legal fiction, which he had himself recognised as a fiction. Not her lover; and yet when she recalled his looks and tones, and a certain indescribable agitation which had been upon him all the evening, some feminine instinct told her that, under other circumstances, he might have become her lover. Her husband he could never be; and yet she had to go on living with him in an anomalous relationship, which was a compound of all these three ties, with the difficulties of all and the comfort of none. Her friend he was; that bond seemed clear and plain; but then is it customary for a lady to go and keep the house of a male "friend," be he ever so tried and trusted? Society, to say nothing of her own feelings, would never allow it; and for once society is in the right.

Hannah felt it so—felt that, stripping off the imaginary brother-and-sister bond, Bernard and she were exactly in the position of a lady and gentleman living together in those Platonic relations, which are possible certainly, but which the wicked world never believes to

be possible, and which Nature herself rejects as being out of the ordinary course of things, and therefore very unadvisable. A life difficult enough to carry on even if the parties were calmly indifferent to one another; but what if they were not indifferent? Though he had never "made love" to her in the smallest degree, never caressed her, even in the harmless salutations which brothers and sisters-in-law so commonly indulge in, still Hannah must have been dull indeed not to have long since found out that in some way or other Bernard was very fond of her; and a young man is not usually "very fond" of a woman, not his own born sister, without, sooner or later, wishing to monopolise her, to have her all to himself—in plain terms, to marry her. And though women have much less of this exclusive feeling—though many a woman will go on innocently adoring a man for years without the slightest wish of personal appropriation—still, when somebody else appropriates him—marries him in short—and the relations are changed, and she drops into a common friend, or less than a friend, then even the noblest and most unselfish woman living will feel, for a time, a slight pang, a blank in her life, a soreness at her heart. It is Nature's revenge upon all shams, however innocent those shams may be.

And poor Hannah was reaping Nature's revenge now. Whether he did or did not love her in a brotherly way, she was cruelly conscious that to go on living with her brother-in-law as heretofore would be a very severe trial. Should she fly from it? The way was open. She could write to Lady Dunsmore, who she knew was again in search of a governess, and would gladly welcome her back. Two days, or one day even, and she might resume her old life, her old duties, and forget this year and half at Easterham as if it had never been.

For a moment the temptation was strong. She felt hunted down; like the Israelites, with the Egyptians behind and the Red Sea before, the dreadful surging sea of the future, over which there seemed no pathway, no possible way of crossing it to any safe shore. If she could but escape, with her reputation clear, out of her brother-in-law's house!—that House on the Hill which had been so pleasant, which she had tried to make a sort of home-beacon to all the parish; and now all the parish levelled at it their cruel stares, their malignant comments, for it was exposed to all. For Bernard's sake, as well as her own, she ought to save him from this—free him from her blighting presence and go.

As she lay thinking, turning over in her mind how best to accomplish this—when she should write and what she should say to Lady Dunsmore—there came the usual little knock at her door, the usual sound of tiny bare feet trotting over the carpet, and the burst of joyous child-laughter at her bedside. And when she hardly noticed it, for it pierced her like a sword, there came a loud wail. "Tannie,

take her! Take Rosie in Tannie arms." Poor Tannie sprang up, and felt that all her well-woven plans were torn down like spider-webs. To go away and leave her child! The thing was impossible.

Our lives, like the year, go through a succession of seasons, which may come early or late, but come in regular order. We do not find fruit in March or primroses in August. Thus, though Hannah's heart now, strangely stirred as it was, had a primrose breath of spring quivering through it, it was not exactly the heart of a girl. She was a woman of thirty, and though she loved—alas, she knew it now only too well!—she did not love romantically, absorbingly. Besides, coexistent with this love had come to her that other sentiment, usually of much later growth—the maternal instinct, which in her was a passion too. Bernard's one rival, and no small one, was his own little child.

As Hannah pressed Rosie to her bosom, all her vague terrors, her equally dreadful delights, faded away into quiet realities, and by the time she had had the child with her for an hour, she felt quite herself again, and was able to carry Rosie down to the Sunday breakfast-table, where the small woman had lately begun to appear, conducting herself like a little princess.

Oh, what a blessing she was! the pretty little maid! How her funny ways, her wonderful attempts at English, and her irresistible bursts of laughter, smoothed over difficulties untold, and helped them through that painful hour—those two, who stood to the little one like father and mother, and yet to one another were nothing, and never could be. This was the strange anomaly of their relationship; that while Rosie was her own flesh-and-blood, closer to her than any child not her very own could possibly be, with Rosie's father there was no tie of blood at all.

The usual Sunday morning routine went on—prayers, breakfast, after breakfast play with Rosie—yet neither Hannah nor Bernard ventured once to look at each other, lest they should betray the piteous secret, which, whether or not hers did, the deadly paleness of Bernard's features, and his nervous, excited manner, only too much revealed.

"I scarcely slept an hour," he said. "I had to sit up and write my sermon. And I found so much to do among my papers. I must never leave home again."

She was silent.

Then he asked her if she were going to church—an idle question for one who never missed church in any weather. Perhaps he did not want her to go? And she would have been angry, but for the strange compassion she always had for him—the feeling that, if any trouble came to him, she should always like to bear it herself. And now he had more to bear than she. He must go up into his pulpit and preach, conscious that all eyes were watching him, all tongues

gossiping concerning him! For in Easterham nothing was hid; rich and poor alike chattered of their neighbours' affairs, and James Dixon's visit to the House on the Hill, in all its particulars, was likely to be as fully known as Mr. Morecomb's interview with Lady Rivers, and its purport as regarded Hannah herself.

The Moat-House, too, must be faced, for at breakfast-time a note had come asking them to dine there, though it was Sunday, as young Mrs. Melville had come over for the day, and particularly wished to see Miss Thelluson.

"You will go?" Bernard had said, passing the note over to her. Her first instinct had been a decided "No;" till, looking down on the bright little face beside her, Aunt Hannah felt that, at whatever cost, she must boldly show her own—at church, at the Moat-House, anywhere and everywhere. There were just two courses open to her—to succumb to the lie, or to meet it and trample it down. So, again taking Rosie in her arms, she looked up fearlessly at Rosie's father.

"Yes, since Lady Rivers asks me, I will certainly go."

It was Hannah's custom to get ready for church quite early, that she might walk with Bernard thither—he disliked walking alone. Never was there a man who clung more affectionately to companionship, or to whom it was more necessary. But this Sunday he never summoned her, so she did not come. Indeed, she had determined not. She watched him start off alone, and then followed, going a longer way round, so that she only reached her pew when he reached his reading-desk. Then the sad tone of his voice as he read, evidently with an effort, the sentence, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves," &c., went to her heart.

Were they sinners? Was it a crime for her to look now at her dead sister's husband, her living Rosie's father, and think that his was one of the sweetest, noblest faces she had ever seen; that had she met him by chance, and he had cared for her, she could have tended him like a mother, served him like a slave—nay, have forgotten for his sake that sacred dream of so many years, the lost love of her girlhood, and become an ordinary human wife and mother—Rosie's mother. And it would all have seemed so right and natural, and they three would have been so happy? Could it be a sin now? Could any possible interpretation, secular or religious, construe it into a sin?

Poor Hannah! Even in God's house these thoughts pursued her; for, as before said, her only law of conduct was how things were, not in the sight of man, but of God. That love, which was either a righteous affection or a deadly sin, could she once assure herself that He did not forbid it, little she cared whether man forbade it or not. Nor, if it were holy, whether it were a happy love or not.

Thus, during her solitary walk home, and a long solitary afternoon that she spent with Rosie—earning that wonderful rest of mind and fatigue of body which the companionship of a child always brings—her

thoughts grew clearer. Rosa's very spirit, which now and then looked strangely out of her daughter's eyes, seemed to say to her that the dead view all things with larger vision than ours, that in their passing away they have left all small jealousies behind them, and remember only the good of their beloved, not themselves at all.

"Oh, Rosa, Rosa!" Hannah thought to herself, "surely you are not angry with me, not even now? I am not stepping into your place and stealing away your joys; I have only tried to fulfil your duties towards this little one and towards him. You know how helpless he is alone! And his pretty lamb—I have to take care of them both. Rosie, my darling, who could ever love you like Tannie? Yet they say it is all unnatural and wrong—that any strange woman would be a better mother to you than I! But that is false, altogether false. When your own mother comes to look at you, as she may do every night,—I would, if I were a happy ghost and God would let me, Rosie, look at her and tell her so!"

These wild and wandering thoughts, the last of which had been said out loud, must have brought a corresponding expression to Hannah's face, for the child caught it, and fixing on her aunt that deep, wise, almost supernatural gaze she sometimes had, answered deliberately, "Yes." For "No"—given with a sweet decisiveness, as if she already knew her own mind—the baby! and a gentle, satisfied "Yes" were among the earliest accomplishments of that two-year-old darling.

But when Rosie was put to bed, and left wide awake in her little crib, fearless of darkness or anything under Tannie's "lots of tisses," left to curl round and fall asleep in the blessed peace of infancy, innocent of all earthly cares—then this world's bitterness darkened down again upon poor Aunt Hannah. She went to dress for the Moat-House dinner, and prepare to join the family circle, where she, always an uncomfortable excrescence, was now regarded—how and in what light did they regard her? Hannah could not tell; she was going there in order to find out.

Of one thing she was sure, the invitation was not given out of pure kindness. Kindness was not the habit of the Rivers family; they generally had a purpose in all they did. More than once lately, Lady Rivers had told her, in as plain terms as so polite a person could, that she—Hannah—stood in the way of her brother-in-law's marriage; that his family wished him married, and she ought to aid them in every possible way towards that desirable end. Could there be a plan formed for lecturing her on this point?

But no. Bernard would never have allowed it. And if he had, Hannah would not have turned back; she had always faced her fate, this solitary woman, and as she now walked alone in the early winter darkness through Easterham village, she braced up her courage and faced it still.

Externally, there seemed nothing to face; only a bright, pleasant drawing-room, and a circle of charming, well-dressed women; whose conversation suddenly paused at her entrance, as if they had been talking her over, feminine fashion, which no doubt they had. Hannah was sure of it. She knew the way they used to talk over other people—the Melville family above all, till Adeline belonged to it—with that sweet acerbity and smooth maliciousness which only women understand. A man's weapons smite keen, but they generally smite straight forwards. Women only give the underhand thrusts, of which Hannah that night had not a few.

"What a long, dark walk, Miss Thelluson; only you never mind dark walks. Were you really quite alone? And what has become of Bernard? for you generally know all his proceedings. We thought him looking so well—so much the better for going from home. But what can he have done with himself since church-time? Are you quite sure that——"

The question was stopped by Bernard's entrance—ten minutes after the dinner hour, of which Sir Austin bitterly complained to his son; and then offered his arm to Hannah, who stood silent and painfully conscious, under the battery of four pairs of feminine family eyes.

"I have been home to fetch Miss Thelluson," said Bernard. "Hannah, you should not have walked here alone."

And he would have taken a seat beside her, but Lady Rivers signed for Bertha to occupy it. Fenced in by a sister on each side, he had not a chance of a word with Hannah all dinner-time.

It was the same thing afterwards. Miss Thelluson would have been amused, if she had not been a little vexed and annoyed, to see herself thus protected, like an heiress in her teens, from every approach of the obnoxious party. Mother and daughters mounted guard successively, keeping her always engaged in conversation, and subjecting Bernard to a sort of affectionate imprisonment, whence, once or twice, he vainly tried to escape. She saw it, for somehow, without intending it, she always saw him everywhere, and was conscious that he saw her, and listened to every word she was saying. Yet she made no effort to get near him, not even when she noticed him surreptitiously take out his watch and look at it wearily, as if entreating "Do let us go home." Every simple word and act of a month ago had a meaning, a dreadful meaning, now.

Hannah was not exactly a proud woman, but she had a quiet dignity of her own, and it was sorely tried this night. Twenty times she would have started up from the smooth, polite circle, feeling that she could support it no longer, save for Bernard's sad, appealing face and his never-ending endurance. But then they loved him in their own way, and they were his "people," and he bore from them what he would never have borne from strangers. So must she.

So she took refuge beside Adeline's sofa. Young Mrs. Melville had never been well since her marriage; they said the low situation of Melville Grange did not agree with her. And ill-health being quite at a discount among the Rivers girls, who were as strong as elephants, Adeline lay rather neglected, watching her husband laughing and talking with her sisters—flirting with them, people might have said, almost as much as before he was married; only, being a brother now, of course it did not matter. Nevertheless, there was at times a slight contraction of the young wife's brow, as if she did not altogether like it. But she laughed it off at once.

"Herbert is so merry, and so fond of coming here. Our girls amuse him much more than his own sisters, he says. Just listen how they are all laughing together now."

"It is good to laugh," said Hannah quietly.

"Oh, yes; I am glad they enjoy themselves," returned Adeline, and changed the conversation; but through it all, the pale, vexed face, the anxious eyes, heavy with an unspoken anger, an annoyance that could not be complained of, struck Hannah with pity. Here, she thought, was a false position too.

At nine the butler came in, announcing formally, "Miss Thelluson's servant."

"It is Grace. I told her to call for me on her way from chapel. I wished to go home early."

"And without Bernard? I understand. Very right; very nice," whispered Lady Rivers, in a tone of such patronising approval, that Hannah repented herself of having thus planned, and was half inclined to call Mr. Rivers out of the dining-room, and tell him she was going. But she did not. She only rose, and bade them all good-night. Not one rough word had broken the smooth surface of polite conversation; yet she was fully aware that, though with that convenient plaistering over of sore or ugly places peculiar to the Rivers family, they said nothing, they all knew well, and knew that she knew they knew, why she was going, and the instant her back was turned would talk her over to their hearts' content. Yet she walked out of the room slowly, calmly, with that dignified, ladylike presence she had, almost better than beauty. Yes, even though she saw Lady Rivers rise to accompany her up-stairs—a piece of condescension so great that there was surely some purpose in it. Lady Rivers seldom took trouble without a purpose.

Yet for a moment she hesitated, sat pulling her rings off and on, and eyeing with her critical woman-of-the-world gaze this other woman, who fulfilled the apostolic law of being in the world, not of it. The long strain of the evening had worn Hannah out, and she was in doubt whether Bernard would like her stealing off thus—whether, since Lady Rivers thought it "wise," it really was not most unwise thus to condense the cloudy scandal into shape by paying it the

respect of acceptance. As she tied her bonnet, her hands trembled a little.

"Are you ready? Then, Miss Thelluson, may I say just one word before you go? As a married lady and the mother of a family, speaking to a young—no, not exactly a young, but an unmarried—person, may I ask, is it true what I hear, that you have had a definite offer of marriage from Mr. Morecomb?"

Hannah started indignantly, and then composed herself.

"I do not quite see that the matter concerns anyone but myself and Mr. Morecomb. But since you have heard this, I conclude he has told you. Yes, it is true."

"And what answer did you give? You may as well tell me: for he will; he is coming here to-morrow."

Hannah waited a moment. "I have given the only answer I could give—No."

Lady Rivers sprang from her chair. "Good heavens! Are you mad? My dear Miss Thelluson, I beg your pardon; but really—to refuse such an offer! If Mr. Morecomb had come and asked me for one of my own daughters, I would at least have considered the matter. To one in your position, and under present circumstances——"

"Excuse me, Lady Rivers; but I am myself the best judge of my own position and circumstances."

"So gentlemanly of him, too—so honourable—when he knew, as everybody knows, the way you are being talked about!"

"He did know, then—" and Hannah checked herself. "Will you oblige me by telling me what he knew? How am I being talked about?" And she turned her face, white as that of a traveller who walks up to face a supposed ghost by a churchyard wall; shuddering but still facing it. It may be only a dead tree after all.

"I am very sorry," said Lady Rivers; and no doubt she was, for she disliked saying unpleasant things, except in a covert way. "It is a most awkward matter to speak about, and I have kept it from the girls as long as possible; but people say in Easterham that it was not for nothing you took part with that unfortunate Grace—Dixon I can't call her, as she has no right to the name. In fact, I have heard it suggested plainly enough that the reason of Bernard's not marrying is because, were it not for the law, he would like to marry you."

Hannah stood silent. All the blood in her heart seemed to stand still too.

"We do not believe it, of course. Neither does Mr. Morecomb. Still it is generally believed at Easterham,—and worse things, too."

"What worse things? Tell me. I insist upon hearing."

Hannah spoke, as she had listened, with a desperate calmness; for she felt that at all costs she must get to the bottom of the scandal—must know exactly how much she had to fight against, and whom.

"Miss Thelluson, you are the very oddest person I ever knew. Well, they say that—that—— Excuse me, but I really don't know how to tell you."

"Then I will tell you; for I heard James Dixon say it, and before my own servants—as of course you know; everybody knows everything in Easterham. They say, these wicked neighbours, that I, a woman not young, not pretty, not attractive in any way, with her dead sister's memory yet fresh in her heart, and her dead sister's child in her arms, am living in unlawful relations with that sister's husband. Lady Rivers, I do not wonder that you shrink from repeating such an atrocious lie."

The other was a little confounded. She had been so very patronising, so condescendingly kind in her manner, to this poor Miss Thelluson, who now stood and looked at her face to face, as much a lady as herself, and ten times more of a woman. Nay, the fire in the grey eyes, the dignity of the figure, made Hannah for the moment even a handsome woman, handsome enough to be admired by many a man.

"Pray don't talk of lies, Miss Thelluson. We object to such an ugly word out of the schoolroom—where, however, your experience must chiefly have lain. This is what made me resolve to speak to you. You cannot be expected to know the world, nor how important it is for Bernard, as a gentleman and a clergyman, that this gossip should be stopped at once. Of course, I only refer to the nonsense about his wishing to marry you. For the rest, his own character—the character of the family—is enough denial. Still, the thing is unpleasant, very unpleasant, and I don't wonder that Bernard feels it acutely."

Hannah started. "Does he? Did he tell you so?"

"Not exactly; he is a very reserved person, as we all know; but he looks thoroughly wretched. We, his family, see that, though you, a stranger, may not. The fact is, he has placed himself, quite against our advice, in a most difficult and painful position, and does not know how to get out of it. You ought to help him; as, most providentially, you have now the means of doing."

Hannah looked up. She was being pricked to death with needles; but still she looked firmly in the face of her adversary, and asked, "How?"

"Do you not see, my dear Miss Thelluson, that every bit of gossip and scandal would necessarily die out, if you married Mr. Morecomb?"

Hannah was but human. For a moment the thought of escape—of flying out of this maze of misery into a quiet home, where a good man's love would at least be hers—presented itself to her mind, tempting her, as many another woman has been tempted, into marriage without love. But immediately her honest soul recoiled.

"Lady Rivers, I would do a great deal for my brother-in-law, who has been very kind to me; but not even for his sake—since you put it so—can I marry Mr. Morecomb. And now"—turning round with

sudden heat—"since you have said all you wanted to say, and I have answered it, will you let me go home?"

Home! As she uttered the word, ending thus the conversation as quietly, to all appearance, as it had begun—though she knew it had been all a planned attack, and that the ladies down-stairs were all waiting eagerly to hear the result of it—as she spoke of home, Hannah felt what a farce it was. Had it been a real brother's home, there at least was external protection. So likewise was there in that other home, which, when she had saved enough, she had one day meant to have—some tiny cottage, where by her own conduct a single woman can always protect herself, keep up her own dignity, and carry out, if ever so humbly, her own independent life. Now, this was lost and the other not gained. As she walked on towards the House on the Hill—that cruel "home" where she and Bernard must live henceforward, as if in a house of glass, exposed to every malicious eye, Hannah felt that somehow or other she had made a terrible mistake. Almost as great a one as that of the poor girl who walked silently by her side, asking no questions—Grace never did ask any—but simply following her mistress with tender, observant, unceasing care.

"Don't let us go through the village," whispered she. "I'll take you round a nearer way, where there are not half so many folk about."

"Very well, Grace; only let us get home quickly. You are not afraid of meeting anybody?"

For Jem Dixon was still at Easterham, she knew, though nothing had been seen of him since that night.

"No, no," sighed Grace; "nobody will trouble me. The master frightened him, I think. My sister told me the master did really speak to the police about him in case he should trouble us while he was away. Look, Miss Thelluson, there he is."

Not Jem Dixon, but Mr. Rivers; yet Hannah instinctively shrank back under the shadow of a high wall, and let him pass her by. She made no explanation to her servant for this; what could she say? And Grace seemed to guess it all without her telling.

It was a bitter humiliation, to say nothing of the pain. As she bade Grace keep close to her, while they hurried along, by narrow alleys and cross cuts, the thought of that happy walk home under the stars, scarcely a fortnight ago, came back to Hannah's mind. Alas! such could never be again. Their halcyon days were done. In her imaginary wickedness, her sinless shame, she almost felt as if she could understand the agony of a real sin—of a woman who loves some other woman's husband, or some man besides her own husband—any of those dreadful stories which she had heard of afar off, but had never seemed to realise. Once, no power of will could put her in the place of these miserable sinners. Now, perhaps, she was as miserable a sinner as any one of them all.

When reaching the gate she saw Mr. Rivers standing there waiting.

She drew back as if it were really so—as if it were a sin for him to be watching for her, as he evidently was, with the kindly tenderness of old.

"Hannah, how could you think of starting off alone? You make me miserable by such vagaries."

He spoke angrily—that fond anger which betrays so much; and when he found he had betrayed it to more than herself, he, too, started.

"I did not know Grace was with you; that alters the case a little. Grace, take Miss Thelluson's wet cloak off, and tell the servants to come at once to prayers."

He was wise and kind. Hannah recognised that; in spite of the bitter feeling that it should be necessary for him to be wise and kind. She came into his study after all the servants were assembled there; and as she knelt near him, listening to the short service customary on Sunday nights, her spirit grew calmer. No one could hear Bernard Rivers, either in his pulpit, as that morning, or among his little household congregation, as now, without an instinctive certainty that he was one of the "pure in heart," who are for ever "blessed."

The servants gone, he and she stood by the fire alone. There was a strange look upon both their faces, as if of a storm past or a storm brooding. Since this time last night, when, after her sore confession was wrung from her, Hannah had tottered away out of the room, she and her brother-in-law had never been one minute alone together, nor had exchanged any but the briefest and most commonplace words. They did not now. They just stood one on either side the fire—so near yet so apart.

A couple that any outside observer would have judged well suited. Both in the prime of life; yet, though he was a little the younger, he did not seem so, more especially of late, since he had grown so worn and anxious looking. Both pleasant to behold, though he had more of actual physical beauty than she; but Hannah had a spiritual charm about her such as few handsome women possess. And both were at that season of life when, though boy and girl fancies are over, the calm, deep love of mature years is at its meridian, and a passion conceived then usually lasts for life. And these two, with every compulsion to love, from within and without, pressing hard upon them—respect, tenderness, habit, familiarity—with no law, natural or divine, forbidding that love, in case it should arise between them, had to stand there, man and woman, brother and sister so-called, and ignore and suppress it all.

That there was something to be suppressed showed plainly enough. In neither was the free-hearted unconsciousness which, when an accusation is wholly untrue, laughs at it and passes it by. Neither looked towards the other; they stood both gazing wistfully into the fire, until the silence became intolerable. Then Hannah, but without extending her hand as usual, bade him "Good-night."

"Good-night? Why so?"

"I am going up-stairs to look at Rosie."

"I believe if the world were coming to an end in half-an-hour, you would still be 'going up-stairs to look at Rosie.'"

That excessive irritability which always came when he was mentally disturbed, and had been heavy upon him in the early time of his sorrow, seemed revived again. He could not help it; and then he was so mournfully contrite for it.

"Oh, forgive me, Hannah! I am growing a perfect bear to you. Come down-stairs again and talk to me. For we must speak out. We cannot go on like this; it will drive me wild. We must come to some conclusion or other. Make haste back, and we will speak together, just as friends, and decide what it shall be."

Alas! what could it be? Every side she looked, Hannah saw no path out of the maze. Not even when, seeing that Grace sat reading her Bible by the nursery fire—Grace was a gentle, earnest Methodist, very religious in her own fashion—she sat down beside *her* living Bible, her visible revelation of Him who was once, like Rosie, a Christmas child, and tried to think the matter quietly out, to prepare herself humbly for being led, not in her own way, but in God's way. The more, as it was not her own happiness she sought, but that of those two committed to her charge in so strange a manner—the man being almost as helpless and as dependent upon her as the child. For she had not lived with Bernard thus long without discovering all his weaknesses; which were the very points upon which she knew herself most strong. When he called, as he did twenty times a day, "Hannah, help me!" she was fully conscious that she did and could help him better than any one else. Did she like him the less for this? Most women—especially those who have the motherly instinct strongly developed—will find no difficulty in answering the question.

How peaceful the nursery was—so warm, and safe, and still. Not a sound but the clock ticking on the chimney-piece, and the wind murmuring outside, and the soft breathing out of that darkened corner, where, snuggled down under the bed-clothes, with the round little head and its circle of bright hair just peeping above, "Tannie's wee dormouse," as she sometimes called her, slept her sound, innocent sleep.

Aunt Hannah bent over her darling with a wild constriction of the heart. What if the "conclusion" to which Mr. Rivers said they must come to-night implied her going away—leaving Rosie behind? The thought was too much to bear.

"I will not—I will not! God gave me the child, God only shall take her from me!"

And rushing to her own room, she vainly tried to compose herself, before appearing in Rosie's father's sight. In vain. His quick eye detected at once that she had been crying; he said so, and then her tears burst out afresh.

"I am so miserable—so miserable! Don't send me away—don't take Rosie from me. I can bear anything but that. It would break my heart if I had to part from my child!"

He answered calmly—was it also a little coldly?—

"Don't distress yourself, Hannah; I had no thought of taking Rosie from you. I promised you she should be all your own, and I mean to keep my word."

"Thank you."

She dried her tears, though she was, indeed, strangely excited still; and they sat down for that serious talk together, which was to have —who knew what end?

The beginning was not easy, though Bernard did begin at once.

"I shall not detain you long, though it is still early. But I must have a few words with you. First, to apologise for a question I put to you last night, which I now feel was intrusive and wrong."

Which question—that about Mr. Morecomb or the final one, which she had answered with such sore truthfulness—he did not say, and she did not inquire.

Bernard continued—

"Let us put that matter aside, and speak only of our own present affairs. I want you to give me your advice on a point in which a woman is a better judge than any man; especially as it concerns a woman."

A woman? Hannah leaped at once to the heart of the mystery, if mystery it were. Her only course was to solve it without delay.

"Is it your possible marriage?"

"It is. Not my love, understand; only my marriage."

They were silent—he watching her keenly. Hannah felt it, and set her face like a stone. She seemed, indeed, growing into stone.

"My family—as they may have told you, for they tell it to all Easterham—are most anxious I should marry. They have even been so kind as to name to me the lady, whom, as we both know her, I will not name, except to say that she is very young, very pretty, very rich; fulfils all conditions they desire for me, not one of which I desire for myself. Also, they tell me—though I scarcely believe this—that if I asked her, she would not refuse me."

"You have not asked her then?"

"If I had, there would be little need for the questions I wished to put to you. First, what is your feeling about second marriages?"

"I thought you knew it. I must surely have said it to you some time?"

"You never have; say it, then."

Why should she not? Nothing tied her tongue now. The end she had once hoped for, then doubted, then feared, was evidently at hand. He was after all going to marry. In a totally unexpected way, her path was being made plain.

Hannah was not a girl, and her self-control was great. Besides,

she had suffered so much of late, that even the very fact of an end to the suffering was relief. So she spoke out as if she were not herself, but somebody else, standing quite apart from poor Hannah Thelluson —to whom it had been the will of God that no love-bliss should ever come.

"I think, with women, second marriages are a doubtful good. If the first one has been happy, we desire no other—we can cherish a memory and sit beside a grave to the last; if unhappy, we dread renewing our unhappiness. Besides, children so fill up a woman's heart, that the idea of giving her little ones a second father would be to most women very painful, nay, intolerable. But with men it is quite different. I have said to Lady Rivers many a time, that from the first day I came it was my most earnest wish you should find some suitable wife, marry her, and be happy—as happy as you were with my sister."

"Thank you."

That dreadful formality of his—formality and bitterness combined! And Hannah knew his manner so well; knew every change in his face—a very tell-tale face; Bernard was none of your reserved heroes who are always "wearing a mask." Her heart yearned over him. Alas! she had spoken truly when she said it was not buried in Arthur's grave. It was quick and living—full of all human affections and human longings still.

"Then, sister Hannah, I have your full consent to my marriage? A mere *mariage de convenance*, as I told you. Not like my first one—ah, my poor Rosa, *she* loved me! No woman will ever love me so well."

Hannah was silent.

"Do you think it would be a wrong to Rosa, my marrying again?"

"Not if you loved again. Men do."

"And not women? Did you mean that?"

"I hardly know what I mean, or what I say," cried Hannah piteously. "It is all so strange, so bewildering. Tell me exactly how the thing stands in plain words, and let me go."

"I will let you go; I will trouble you no more about myself or my affairs. You do not care for me, Hannah, you only care for the child. But that is natural—quite natural. I was a fool to expect any more."

Strange words for a man to say to a woman, under any other feeling than one. Hannah began to tremble violently.

"What could you expect more?" she faltered. "Have I not done my duty to you—my sisterly duty?"

"We are *not* brother and sister, and we lie—we lie to our own souls—in calling ourselves so."

He spoke passionately; he seized her hand, then begged her pardon; suddenly went back to his own place, and continued the conversation.

"We are neither of us young, Hannah—not boy and girl anyhow—

and we have been close friends for a long time. Let us speak openly together, just as if we were two departed souls looking out of Paradise at ourselves, our old selves—as our Rosa may be looking now."

Our Rosa! It went to Hannah's heart. The tenderness of the man, the unforgetfulness! Ah, if men knew how women prize a man who does not forget! "Yes," she repeated softly, "our Rosa."

"Oh, that it were she who was judging us, not these!"

"Not who?"

"The Moat-House—the village—everybody. It is vain for us to shut our eyes, or our lips either. Hannah, this is a cruel crisis for you and me. People are talking of us on every hand; taking away our good name even. James Dixon's is not the only wicked tongue in the world. It is terrible, is it not?"

"No," she said, after a moment's hesitation. "At least, not so terrible but that I can bear it."

"Can you? Then I ought too. And yet I feel so weak. You have no idea what I have suffered of late. Within and without, nothing but suffering; till I have thought the only thing to do was to obey my family's wish, and marry. But whether I marry or not, the thing seems plain—we cannot go on living as we have done. For your sake as well as my own—for they tell me I am compromising you cruelly—we must make some change. Oh, Hannah! what have I said, what have I done?"

For she had risen up, the drooping softness of her attitude and face quite gone.

"I understand you. You need not explain further. You wish me to leave you. So I will; to-morrow if you choose; only I must take the child with me. I will have the child!" she continued in a low desperate voice. "Do what you like, marry whom you like, but the child is mine. Her own father shall not take her from me."

"He has no wish. Her unfortunate father!"

And never since his first days of desolation had Hannah seen on Bernard's countenance such an expression of utter despair.

"You shall settle it all," he said, "you who are so prudent, and wise, and calm. Think for me, and decide."

"What am I to think or decide?" And Hannah vainly struggled after the calmness he imputed to her. "How can I put myself in your place, and know what you would wish?"

"What I would *wish!* Oh, Hannah! is it possible you do not guess?"

She must have been deaf and blind not to have guessed. Dumb she was—dumb as death—while Bernard went on, speaking with excited rapidity.

"When a man's wish is as hopeless and unattainable as a child's for the moon, he had better not utter it. I have long thought this. I think so still. Happy in this world I can never be; but what

would make me least unhappy would be to go on living as we do, you and Rosie and I, if such a thing were possible."

"Is it impossible?" For with this dumbness of death had come over Hannah also the peace of death—as if the struggle of living were over, and she had passed into another world. She knew Bernard loved her, though they could never be married, no more than the angels. Still, he loved her. She was content. "Is it impossible?" she repeated, in her grave, tender, soothing voice. "Evil tongues would die out in time—the innocent are always stronger than the wicked. And our great safeguard against them is such a life as yours has been. You can have almost no enemies."

"Ah!" replied he mournfully, "but in this case a man's foes are they of his own household. My people—there is no fighting against them. What do you think—I am talking to you, Hannah, as if you were not yourself, but some other person—what do you think my stepmother said to me to-night? That unless you married Mr. Morecomb, or I Ellen Melville (there, her name is out, but no matter) —unless either of these two things happened, or I did the other wicked, heart-breaking thing of turning you out of my doors, she would never admit you again into hers. That, in fact, to-night is the last time you will be received at the Moat-House."

Hannah's pride rose. "So be it. I am not aware that that would be such a terrible misfortune."

"You unworldly woman, you do not know! Oh, forgive me, forgive me, Hannah; I am forgetting all you must feel. I am speaking to you as if you were my conscience—my very own soul—which you are."

The love that glowed in his eyes, the emotion that trembled in his voice! Hannah was not a young woman, nor, naturally, a passionate woman, but she would have been a stone not to be moved now. She sat down, hiding her face in her hands.

"Oh, it is hard, hard!" she sobbed. "When we might have been so happy—we and our child!"

Bernard left his seat, and came closer to hers. His breath was loud and fast, and his hands as he took Hannah's—grasping them so tight that she could not unloose them, though she faintly tried—were shaking much.

"Tell me—I never believed it possible till now, I thought you so calm and cold, and you knew all my faults, and I have been harsh to you often—only too often!—but, Hannah, if such a thing could be, if the law allowed it—man's law, for God's is on our side—if we could have been married, would you have married me?"

"Yes," she answered, putting both her hands on his shoulders, and looking at him with a sad solemnity, as of those who take farewell for life; "yes, I would!"

Then, before he had time to answer, Hannah was gone.